

CHANDAMAMA

SEPTEMBER 1991

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Turn to Page 19
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Aparna"



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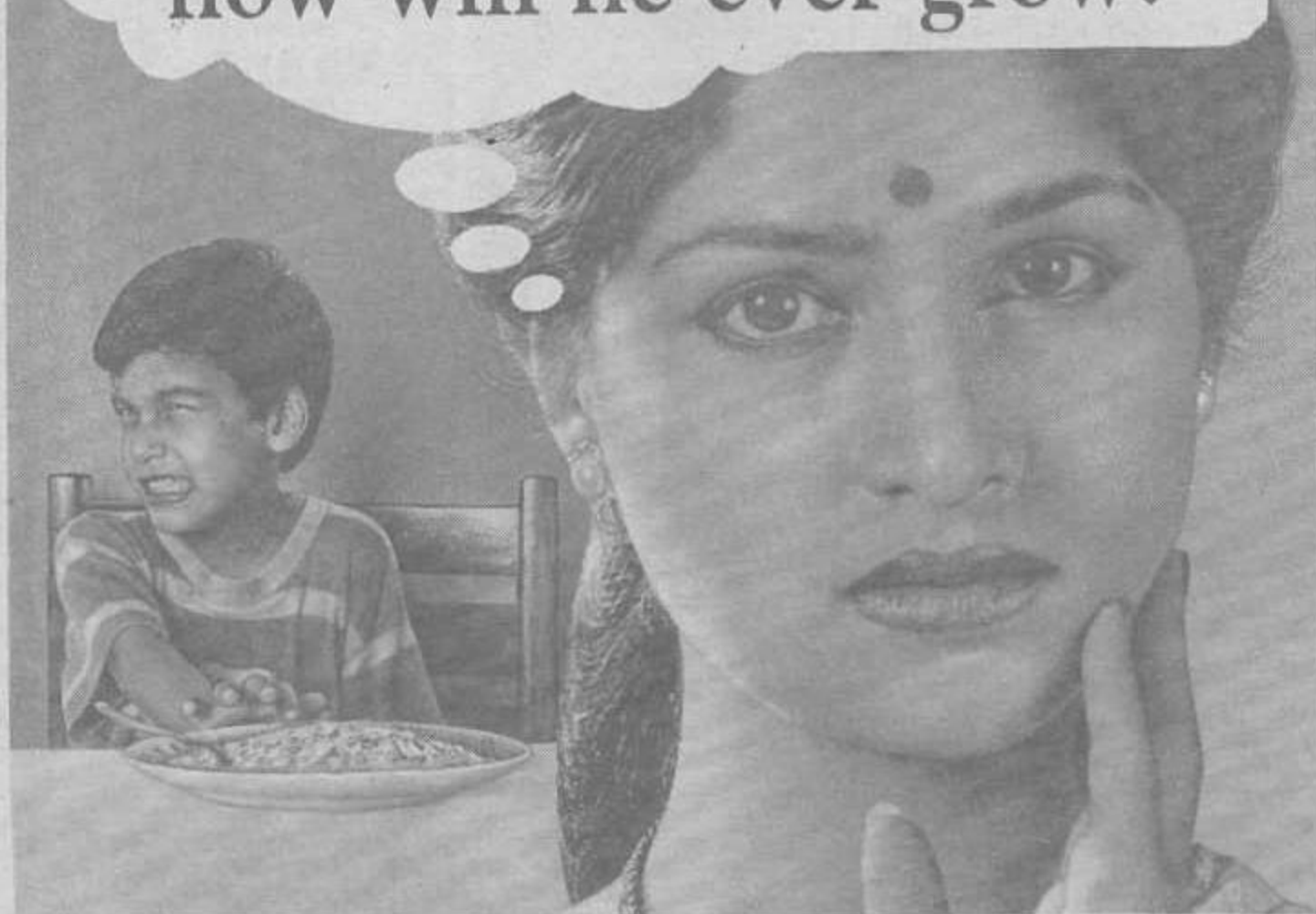
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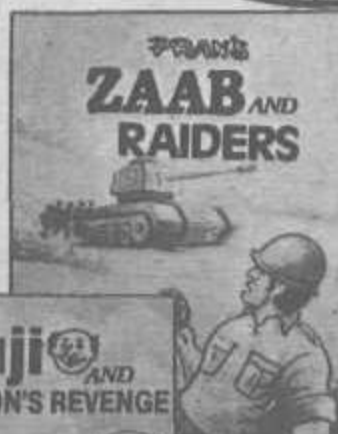
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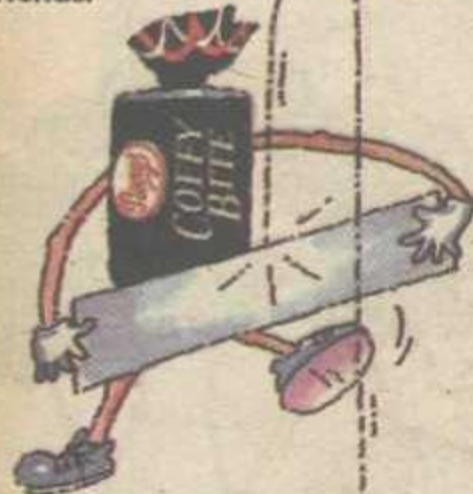
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PARRY'S PAGE

IT'S MAGIC

Hi audience, oops I mean friends. Do you see hats and wands in our hands? Three guesses why. Did you say magic show? My goodness, you're clever. Caramilk, Coffy Bite, Try-Me and myself have become ace magicians since we last met. Pity you can't see us perform. Never mind! We'll show you our tricks, so you can learn them and amaze your friends.



When they land, they will be joined together. P.S. Practise this trick a couple of times before you show it to your friends.



CLIP GRIP

Take a piece of paper which is about as long as a ruler and twice as broad as it. Fold the paper and put two paper clips on it like this. Then say Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum... Clips fly and



become one.

As you do so, tug sharply at each end of the paper. The clips will fly into the air.



THUMBTHING SCARY

Hold your left hand out in front of you. Point to the right, with your palm facing you and the top joint of your thumb bent towards you (picture 1). Place your right hand against it as shown, with your right forefinger covering up the joint.

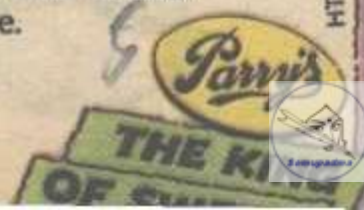
Now if you slide your right hand along the left forefinger, it will look as if you are removing the tip of your left thumb (picture 2 shows you how



it will look to your friends standing in front). Put it back quickly or someone will yell in fright.




Well, pals, that's all for now. Our bag of tricks is bursting, but this is all we have place for. Hope you have great fun trying out these tricks on your family and friends. Do write to us and tell us all about it. Your friends, Coffy Bite, Caramilk, Try-Me and myself would love to hear from you. Bye.





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CHANDAMAMA

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**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

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A PREMONITION : As instructed by Ravana, the demonesses guarding Sita try their best to persuade her to accede to his request and become his wife. When Sita Devi refuses, they threaten her with death. However, one of the demonesses cautions them, for, she has had a dream of impending doom for all of them. **VEER HANUMAN** tells us how he manages to listen to all their conversation.

THIEVING A THIEF : Narayanan's scholarly pursuits appeal to the villagers who rename him Vedanarayanan. But have the Vedas also taught him how to thief? wonders Velan from the neighbouring village. Of the two, who is more crafty? 'The lighter side' of the story has the answer.

THE MISSING STATUE : Seven pedestals in the secret chamber, six of them with damsels carved out of diamond. The silk cloth draped on the seventh gives some clue to Nawab Habib. His search for the missing statue is hazardous. An Arab folk tale.

PLUS all your favourites, including **ADVENTURES OF APURVA** and **PANCHATANTRA**.

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Controlling Editor:
NAGI REDDI



Founder:
CHAKRAPANI

EDUCATION : NEED FOR A STRONG BASE

It was Prime Minister Narasimha Rao who, as the Minister of Education in the Rajiv Gandhi Government, had formulated the National Education Policy. Not surprisingly has the new government at the Centre announced that it would revert to the basic education policy put into action in 1986.

Education is generally recognised as an instrument of transformation. We know of the well-known instance of that teacher, Vishnu Sharma, who went about moulding the three princes placed in his care into men ready to take over the duties demanded of them as rulers. And the method he adopted to achieve this mission was by telling them stories, which were subsequently put together as *The Panchatantra*.

So, education aims at changing the individual and, through him, the society and social culture. True education has necessarily to bring about the total development of an individual's personality.

Unfortunately, there is a general impression that the purpose of education is not being achieved. We know that there is always a proportion between supply and demand. Our schools and colleges turn out thousands of educated youth. However, as the volume of demand is very low, a majority of them remain unemployed. This results in social unrest.

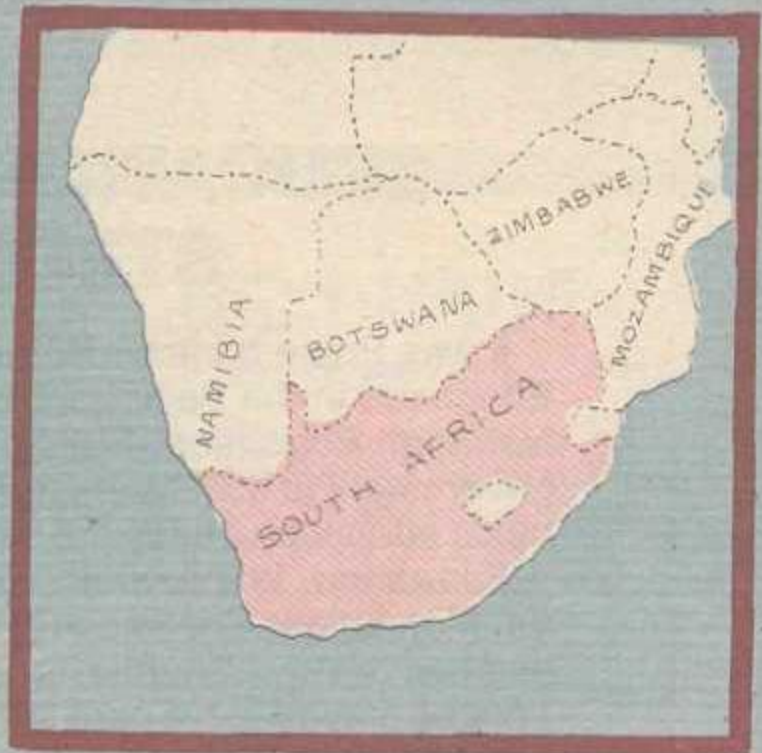
Have we, therefore, to conclude that our education system has failed? It has been assessed that the amount spent on a graduate will be enough to provide primary education to as many as eighty children. Universalising primary education and thereby increasing literacy is the need of the day. Let not our education be like an inverted pyramid—without a strong base.

Apartheid on Way Out

Sports lovers all over the world will be eagerly looking forward to watching South Africa in action in international events, now that the ban on their participation has been lifted. Early in July, the country was readmitted to the International Cricket Council (ICC) after a boycott lasting 21 years, and to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which had expelled South Africa from its fold in 1970 because of its apartheid policies.

The removal of the ban thus paves the way for South African participation in the World Cup Cricket in February 1992 and in the Barcelona (Spain) Olympics later in the year. Apartheid had denied a generation of sportsmen and women in South Africa the right to compete against the best in the sports arenas of the world.

A change in the policy of the all-White Pretoria regime was first seen when the black leader, Nelson Mandela, was released late in 1989 after incarceration in prisons for more than 25 years.



He then entered into dialogue with President de Klerk, who recently agreed to repeal three main apartheid laws, resulting in freedom to blacks to send their children to schools of their choice, to take up residence anywhere in the country, and to seek employment in even institutions owned by the White people. It may be recalled that India had led the nations of the world to bring pressure on the South African Government to lift apartheid, and they all most willingly resorted to actions including economic sanctions.

The world watched with bated breath the changing South African horizon. The U.S.A quickly reacted, by lifting the six-year-old economic sanctions against that country. Japan expressed in favour of similar action, while countries like Australia and Sweden felt that the U.S. decision was premature.

The American argument was, South Africa had lifted the emergency, freed political prisoners, and started discussion as to how a non-racial government could be installed.

Mr. Mandela has welcomed

Pretoria's overtures but at the same time sounded caution. There are political prisoners still in jail under some pretext or other; there is as yet no free political activity or political expression because of unabated violence in the country—between black and black—because of the government's favoured treatment of some groups of the coloured population.

Mr. Mandela might tell Mr. De Klerk, "Be a little more sport."

Chandran



Nelson Mandela with wife Winnie



A Shrew Tamed

Once there was a rich merchant in a village. He was a quiet, peace-loving person. Unfortunately, his wife was a shrew, not easily satisfied and always finding fault with her husband and three sons. For the sake of the boys, the man meekly suffered all the indignities heaped on him by his wife. When they became grown-ups, he decided to leave the place and go on a long pilgrimage. He secretly wished that his pilgrimage would never end.

After her husband left on his pilgrimage, the woman turned all her anger and abuse against her sons. The eldest one, who was now managing his father's shop, thought he would marry, so that his wife could help his mother in her chores and she might become happy. On the contrary, the woman found in her daughter-

in-law one more target for her ire. After a few days, the son moved out of the village with his wife.

Now the second son began running his father's shop. For some days, there was peace at home. At his mother's instance, he also married and brought his bride home. Before days had passed, the young girl, too, was reduced to tears by the mother-in-law. She goaded her husband to take her back to her home. Her ageing parents persuaded him to stay back, as they did not have a son to look after them.

The woman was left with her third son, who now took over his father's business. He used to be away from home for most part of the day, and so all his mother's pent-up anger was reserved for him by the time he came home. He was at a loss to decide how he



could make his mother change her ways. After all he was her son and he had no right to punish her.

He heard that a carpenter in the neighbouring village was making wooden dolls. He went to him and ordered a life-size doll of a girl. When it was ready, he brought it one night and kept it in the vacant house next door.

After a couple of days, he announced, "Amma, I've married and brought my bride. But she is afraid to come here, so I've kept her in the adjoining house."

"That's very clever of you!" the woman mused. "So you thought that if she is not here, I would spare her? Just you wait."

She waited till the next morning and saw her son leave his house for the shop. After a while, she got hold of a pestle and beat her head, injuring herself. Then she came out into the street and

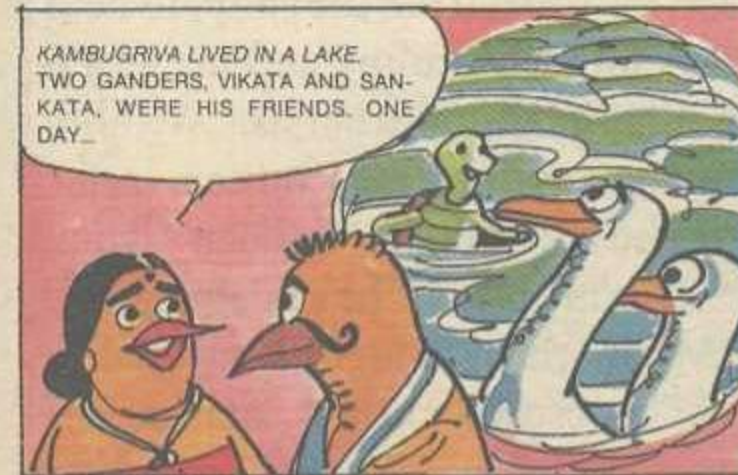
cried aloud, "Isn't there anybody to wreak revenge? See, how my daughter-in-law has attacked me and escaped to her house."

The neighbours were all aghast at the sight of the woman bleeding from her head. But none of them dared enter the next house and drag her daughter-in-law out.

As they stood there wondering what could be done, the woman's son returned from the shop, to hear his mother's wailing and his neighbours' angry outbursts. Without saying anything, he led them inside to show them the wooden figure. "She's my bride," he said, laughing. "My mother's daughter-in-law!"

The crowd turned against the woman. "We now know who's to be blamed. You've punished yourself for your abominable behaviour."

Ashamed of herself, the woman apologised to her son.



पूर्वे वयसि यः शान्तः स शान्त इति मे मतिः ।
धातुषु क्षीयमाणेषु शमः कस्य न जायते ॥

HOW CAN WE TAKE YOU WITH US? YOU CAN'T FLY.



I'VE AN IDEA! I'LL CLUTCH THE MIDDLE OF A STICK WITH MY TEETH; YOU HOLD THE ENDS WITH YOUR BEAKS AND CARRY ME.



IF BY CHANCE YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH TO SPEAK, YOU'LL FALL TO THE GROUND AND DIE!



I SWEAR I'LL NOT OPEN MY MOUTH AS LONG AS WE FLY.



THE GANDERS AGREE TO CARRY THE TURTLE WITH THEM.

LOOK! LOOK! SOMETHING STRANGE IS FLYING!



LOOK! THERE, LOOK!



KAMBUGRIVA THE TURTLE HEARS PEOPLE TALK ABOUT HIM, HE IS CURIOUS TO KNOW WHAT IT IS, SO HE OPENS HIS MOUTH TO ASK...



LOOK! HOW ODD!

MRS. TITTIBHA CONCLUDES THE STORY...

THAT WAS HOW THE TURTLE FELL TO THE GROUND AND PERISHED FOR NOT HEEDING THE ADVICE OF HIS FRIENDS.



SO, YOU TAKE ME FOR A CARELESS FOOL LIKE KAMBUGRIVA? DON'T WORRY, NO HARM WILL BEFALL YOUR EGGS. I SHALL PROTECT THEM.



BUT, MY DEAR! I CAN'T HELP WORRYING.

I'M HERE.



THE SEA OVERHEARS THE BIRDS AND LAUGHS TO HIMSELF.



MY DEAR, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO LAY EGGS!



He is really quiet-natured who shows quietude in his youth. Who does not appear quiet when, with age, the vitality declines?

TIME PASSES BY. MRS. TITTIBHA LAYS EGGS. ONE DAY, WHEN THE BIRDS ARE AWAY -



NOW IS THE TIME FOR ME TO TEST THE STRENGTH OF THAT BOASTER, TITTIBHA.

I SHALL TAKE AWAY THESE EGGS BEFORE THEY RETURN.



SOON THE BIRDS RETURN. OH! MY EGGS, OH! NO! THE WICKED OCEAN HAS SWALLOWED THEM. YOU NEVER CARED FOR MY WARNING.



I SHALL NOW JUMP INTO THE SEA AND DIE.



NO! WAIT! PLEASE! STOP!



I SHALL DRINK THIS CRUEL SEA TO THE LAST DROP.



STOP SUCH SILLY TALK! SEEK THE HELP OF YOUR FRIENDS BEFORE YOU GO TO FIGHT THE SEA.



IT'S AT TIMES LIKE THIS THAT WE NEED THE HELP OF OUR FLOCK.



WHEN I CAN TACKLE THAT WICKED SEA MYSELF -



NONSENSE. IF YOU KNEW THE STORY OF THE MAD ELEPHANT, YOU'D KNOW WHY -



LET ME HEAR THAT!



मूर्खोऽपि शोभते तावत् सभायां वस्त्रवेष्टितः ।
तावच्च शोभते मूर्खो यावत् किञ्चिन्न भाषते ॥



The fool too can shine in an assembly if dressed in a dignified fashion — but he does so only till he has opened his mouth!

TOWARDS BETTER ENGLISH

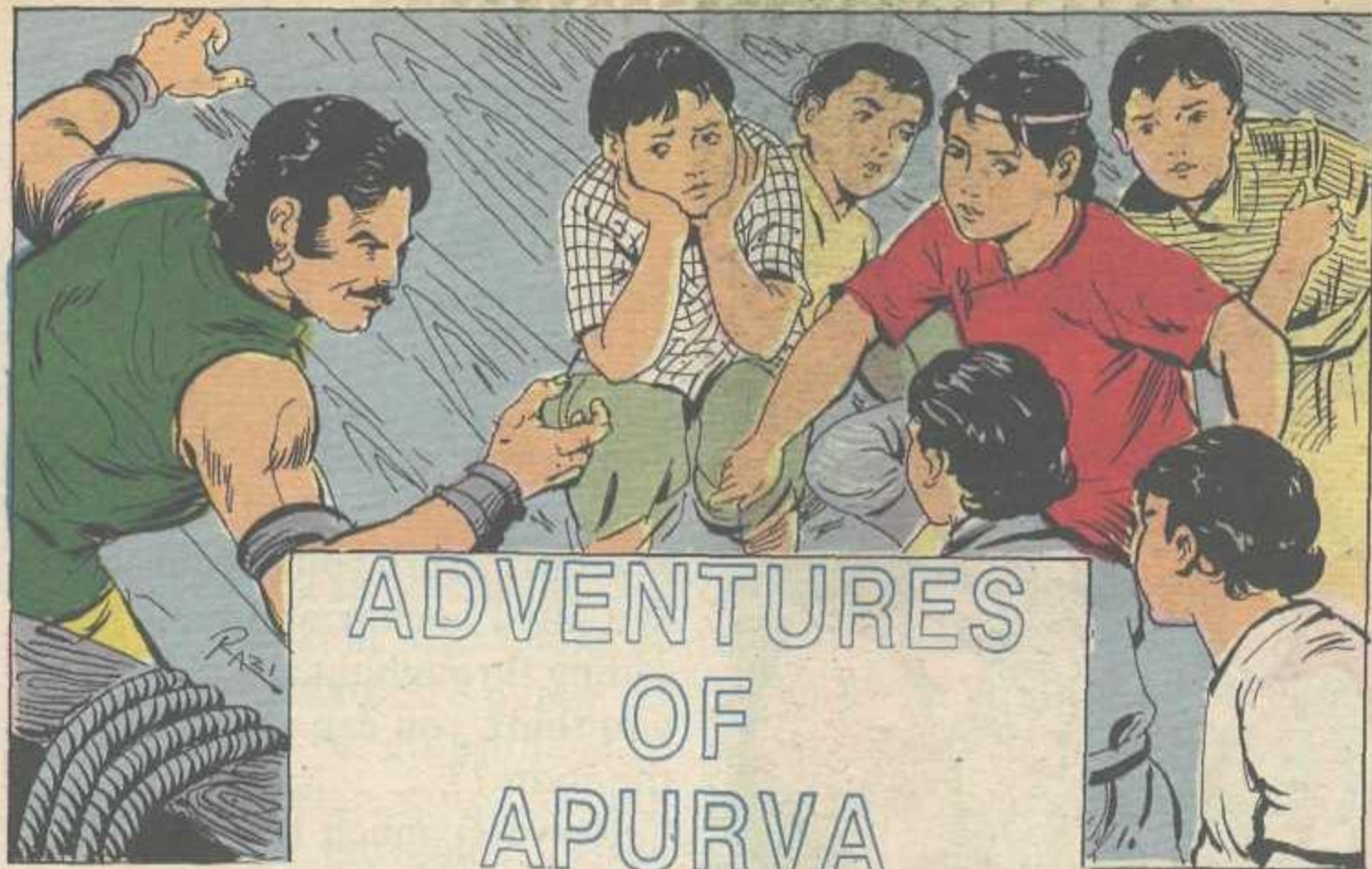
OF HEART AND HONEY

N. Karthikeyan of Pune has come across the expression 'a honey tongue, a heart of gall'. He feels it is not something quite common and wonders whether it is a proverb at all.

One of the earliest examples of its usage is from John Lyly who, some 400 years ago, said: "A dissembler hath evermore honey in his mouth, and gall in his mind". Now, anybody who wears a mask (dissembler) plays two different roles, one real, the other not real or something assumed. The contrasting roles can be distinguished when honey flows from his tongue, or he says all nice things, at the same time hiding his true feelings; maybe his heart is full of bitterness, like the liquid that comes out of one's liver, generally known as bile. Something comparable is "They promise honey with a poisoned mouth" from another early writer, Marbeck, while T. Watson describes a mortal enemy as one who "carries gall in his heart and honey in his tongue". Let's hope we will have no occasion to use this proverb for any of our acquaintances.

Santhosh Kumar Jain of Madras remembers to have played 'ducks and drakes,' by throwing a flat stone so as to skip along the surface of water. He also knows that a drake is the male of the duck. But when he carelessly spent all his pocket-money, his father was angry with him for "making ducks and drakes" of his little savings. The youngster took one minute to guess what his father was driving at. He then remembered—hadn't his father advised him to keep aside the money to buy some story-books? And, look at that! He had gone and spent it on chocolates and cool drinks. He should have used the money prudently.





ADVENTURES OF APURVA

7

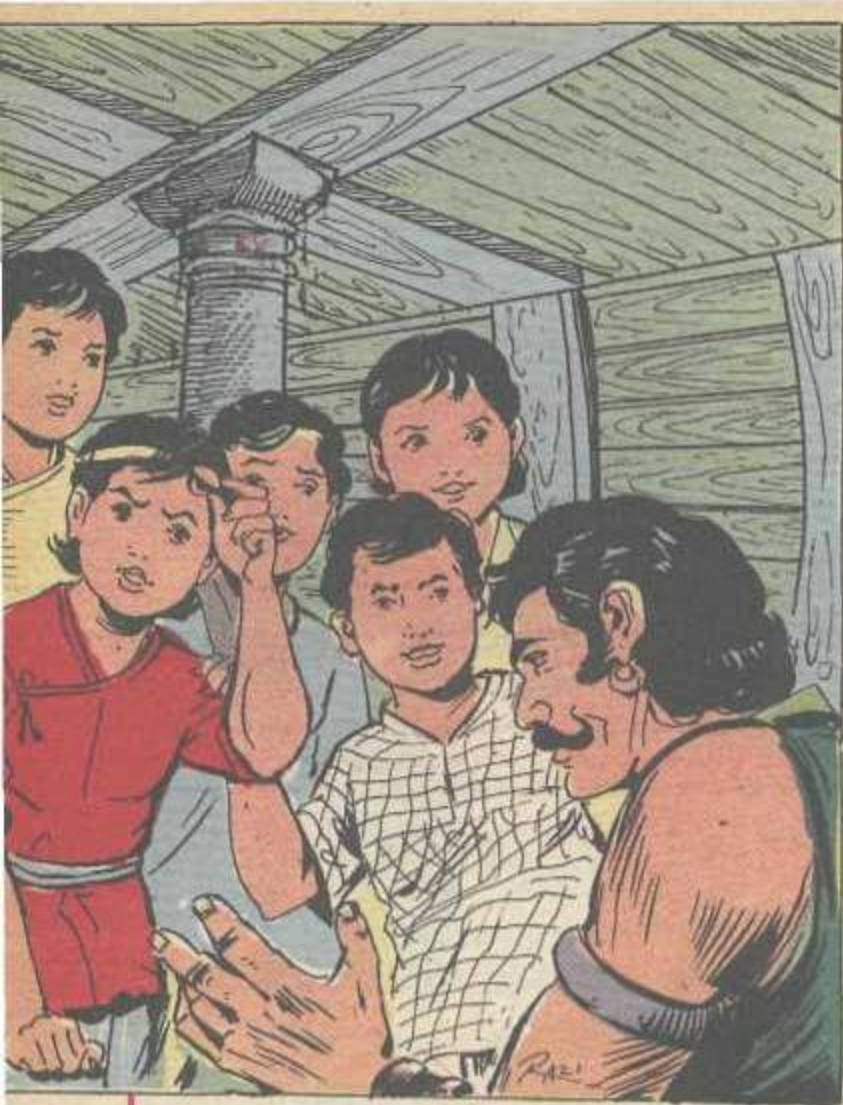
(Apurva is small in size—no bigger than a doll—but great in power, for he has emerged from a Yajna in the Himalayas. To save those in distress is his life's mission. With the help of Samir, whom he saved earlier, he is now trying to rescue five boys aboard a ship, whom pirates intend to sell in a slave market.)

“Hello, boys, won't you get up? Don't you wish to enjoy the wonderful sunrise on the ocean?”

The fellow who called out to the boys was the deputy gang-leader of the pirates who had killed his leader the previous evening. He was all smiles.

Apurva had briefed Samir

what to do. Samir, in his turn, had asked the five boys to pretend to be asleep although they had had hardly any sleep at night. The five boys, coming to know that they had been kidnapped, would have fainted or cried. But Samir's presence beside them made all the difference. Samir managed to keep them not only



fearless, but also cheerful.

The boys sat up and feigned total surprise. "Where are we?" Samir asked the fellow. "And who are you, sir?"

"Well, let me answer your second question first. I am Lalu, the captain of the ship."

"Captain of the ship?" questioned Samir.

"You're surprised? Well, the captain who brought you into the ship had to suddenly depart on an urgent mission, putting me in his position. I'm sure, you now know where you are. You're on a ship," informed Lalu.

"It's time we left!" said Samir,

stretching his arms and standing up.

"Ha! ha!" Lalu gave out a Satanic laughter, but soon controlled himself and said, "It's time for you to enjoy a voyage. I don't know what came upon you, but you fell asleep and we had no heart to disturb you in your sleep. We lifted anchor and have been sailing throughout the night. Do you think you can swim back to the shore?"

However much he tried, Lalu could not help being sarcastic.

The boys looked at one another as if they knew nothing about their predicament!

"Then, what should we do?" asked Samir.

"Enjoy a voyage! We'll be back at the same shore after some days and you'll return home rich with new experience!" consoled Lalu.

"Not a bad idea, but what about our parents, relatives and friends? Won't they suffer a lot when they are unable to locate us?" asked a boy.

"Won't they rejoice a lot when you return?" observed Lalu.

"You're really wise," commented Samir.

Lalu felt flattered. He looked

at some of his lieutenants who stood at the door, hoping that they heard the compliment.

The boys were led on to the deck. As they stood enjoying the sunrise, Samir heard Apurva calling him. He knew that when Apurva calls someone, the call is heard only by the person called.

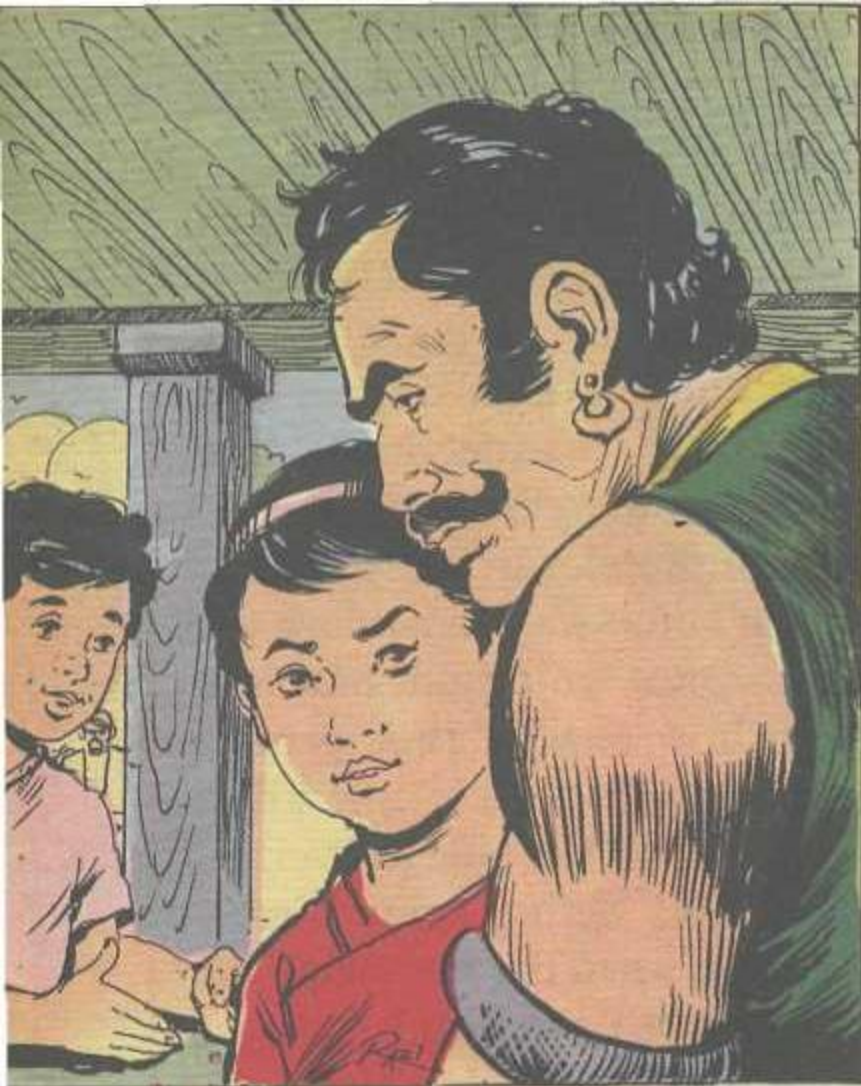
Not sure from where the call came, Samir went to the edge of the deck. There stood Apurva, on the back of a dolphin. The dolphin was swimming, keeping pace with the movement of the ship.

"Now that you're in the hands of the pirates and you can't escape, they could be rude

towards you. But if they're pretending to be kind, it means they intend to get something else done by you. At night I heard Lalu and his men discuss their plan. They are expecting to come across a merchant ship. They plan to plunder it. They may use you in some way to achieve that goal. Once you find out from them how exactly they propose to go about it, do let me know. Perhaps I will be able to overhear your talks hiding somewhere. I can then warn the merchant ship at the right time," said Apurva.

"Hello, boy, don't lean like that. You may tumble into the sea and become the breakfast for





a while while I'm waiting for you to join me at breakfast!" said Lalu, laughing.

Samir turned towards Lalu and sported a broad smile. With his friends, they sat with Lalu for breakfast. "What do you do, sir, with your ship?"

"We're merchants, boys! But we ran into bad times. Our ship was plundered by another merchant!"

"How wicked of him!" remarked Samir.

"You're right, my friend. He is wicked and cruel. He even killed a number of my men. We were not prepared for that, good and

innocent people as we are!" lamented Lalu.

"You're not only good and innocent, but also kind and generous. Who will care to invite five—I mean six—boys aboard and let them enjoy a voyage, food and lodge all free? But what do you propose to do now?" asked Samir.

"Well, we're heading towards a certain island where we think we can make some money..."

"But how? You carry no merchandise with you—unless we six boys are your merchandise?" said Samir, laughing.

"Ha ha ha ha, ha ha!" Lalu forced himself to a laugh. "You boys know how to crack jokes, eh? But I must answer your question. Yes, we've no merchandise. But we can get some merchandise right in the sea—if you help us a little."

"Right in the sea? And what kind of help can we give you?" asked Samir.

"If our calculations prove correct, we should soon come face to face with the ship of the very merchant who plundered us. What I suggest is, we'll sail close to that ship and hoist the distress signal—that's the dark flag. You

boys must stand on the deck and cry for help."

"Then?"

"When the merchant ship came closer, you'll say that pirates have killed the crew of this ship as well as your guardians who were the passengers along with you. Curiosity will make them come aboard our ship. You must lead them into a cabin where we'll be waiting for them. Once you've done that, your part of the work will be over. The rest shall be our business," said Lalu gleefully.

"What an interesting idea!" exclaimed the boys, at a hint from their leader, Samir.

"You appreciate the idea, eh? Good. You'll be rewarded for your cooperation!" said Lalu patronisingly.

"Thank you. But what do you propose to do to the merchant and his men?" asked Samir.

Lalu hemmed and hawed and said, "Well, well, they deserve to die for what they've done to us earlier. But you know how kind-hearted I am. I may be satisfied with merely looting his ship. Then we may sink his ship and take them prisoners—to sell them as slaves. To spare their

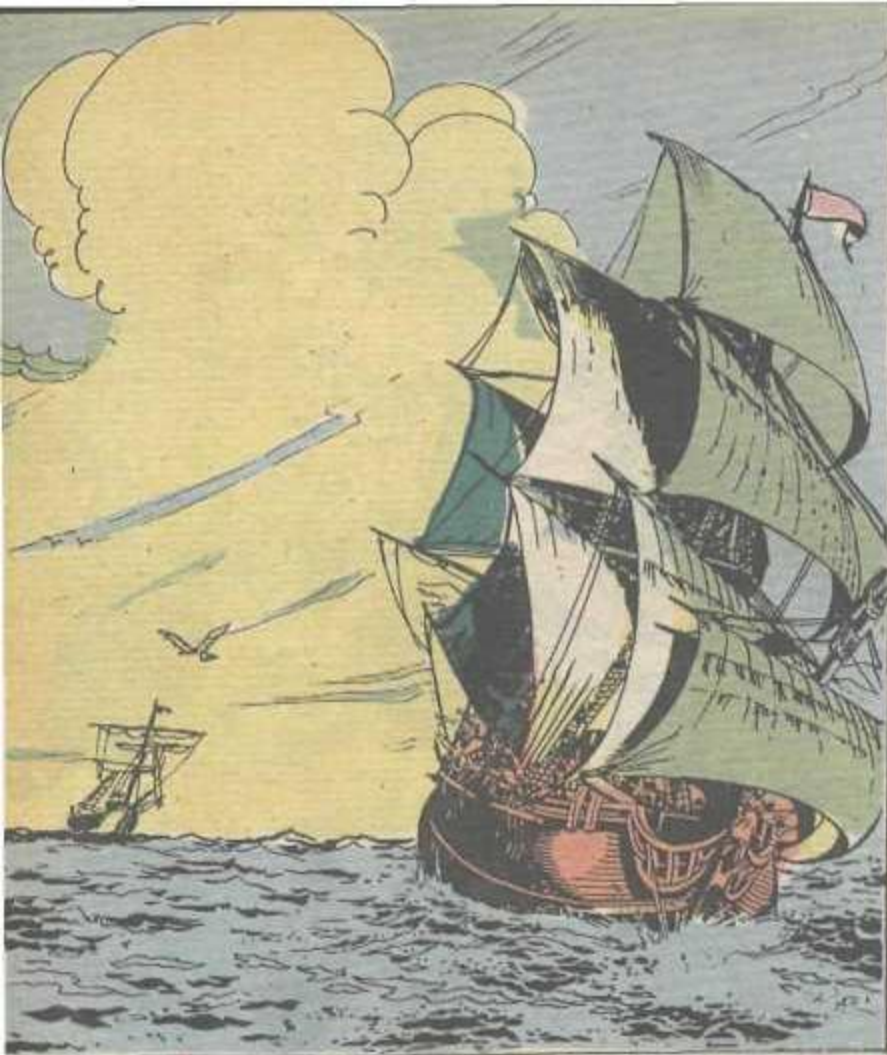


lives would be kindness enough. What do you say?"

Shivers ran through the spines of the boys at the mention of slave market. To end up there is going to be their lot, too, unless their plan for getting rid of the pirates materialises.

An assistant of the pirate chief entered the cabin and announced excitedly, "Sardar, the ship has been located!"

"Fine. Let our men row in that direction as fast as they can. But remember, when you come so close to it that those in the ship can see you, leave the oars to these boys and hide."



Lalu and the boys came out on the deck. The merchant ship was not very far. The pirate ship headed towards it quite fast, for the pirates were expert rowers. After nearly two hours, they left the oars to the boys and taught them how to work them. Samir took a position so that he could come in full view of the merchant ship.

However, he could see something which nobody else observed. A seagull emerged from the pirate ship, carrying something in its beak and flew towards the merchant ship. Samir understood that Apurva

had sent the necessary message.

Lalu and his men, fully armed, sat hiding in a large cabin. "You must guide the merchant and whoever is with him, into this cabin," they briefed Samir.

Samir now began shouting for help. He saw a respectable man coming out on the deck of the merchant ship, accompanied by a few able-bodied men.

"None but we six boys are on this ship. Our guardians and the crew were all killed by pirates. Save us!" he shouted.

The merchant ship came closer. Soon a long plank was extended to serve as a bridge between the two ships. The merchant and four of his men stepped into the pirate ship.

"Where are the rogues hiding?" the merchant asked Samir in a whisper. Samir pointed to the cabin, but said aloud, "Sir, please come into this cabin. Whatever wealth the pirates could not take is still there. Take the wealth but take us home!"

"Don't worry, you boys! We've come to your rescue," said the merchant. Then he suddenly locked the cabin where the pirates hid. Through the window he said, "Look here, fools, the



moment you try to escape or try to do any mischief, we'll set fire to the whole ship while you're locked up. Know that I have twenty-five strong guards with me. We're fully armed. You've harassed so many merchants in the past, killed so many innocent seafarers. But every wickedness has to come to an end at last. We've barrellfuls of oil to reduce your ship and you to ashes. Sit quiet. By tomorrow we'll reach the shore. You'll be given drinking water till then, but no food. If you move, you die!"

There was silence. The merchant, indeed, had a good number of guards with him. Ten of them guarded the cabin. The

others were busy tugging the pirate ship by their own vessel.

The boys were in tears—with joy. Samir was looking for Apurva, but could not see him.

"How did you manage to send that brief but accurate note through the seagull?" the noble merchant asked Samir, patting him on the back.

"To be truthful, sir, not I, but an angel who came to our rescue did it."

"Where is he?"

"I don't know. I hope, he meets you," said Samir.

The two ships now proceeded towards the shore.

— To continue

Whoever leads an ox to drink must first wet his own feet.

You never know what you can do till you try.

HE WHO RIDES THE TIGER....

Kandan used to look after the sheep belonging to the Jenmi (landlord) of Kattur. He would herd them to the nearby mountains and allow them to graze till evening before he took them back to their sheds.

One day, he wanted some extra money very badly, but none of his friends would extend a helping hand. So, he decided to sell one of the goats and pocket the money. After all, the jenmi might not miss just one goat.

But, in the evening, the jenmi counted the sheep. "One is missing. Where did it go?" he asked Kandan. Without batting an eyelid, he replied, "Sir, I was resting for a while, when a tiger came, pounced on a goat, and dragged it away, before I could run after him." The jenmi merely remarked, "Is that so?" and kept silent.

The next day, Kandan sold another goat, and when the jenmi enquired, he said very causally, "The tiger came again and took away another goat."

The next morning, as Kandan was starting for the mountains, the jenmi told him that he and hunter Velu would accompany him. Till the evening, no tiger came, and the jenmi got suspicious. "Why didn't the tiger come today?" he asked Kandan.

Quick-witted Kandan replied, "Didn't I tell you, sir, that the tiger seemed intelligent as he came to pick up the goat the same time I was resting? Today he must have known that you and the hunter were awaiting him. Sure, he's very intelligent!"

The jenmi knew Kandan had fooled him on two days. "From tomorrow, Velu will look after the goats. And I won't have you in my service." Kandan realised that the master had seen through his game. He fell at his feet and asked for pardon, promising that he would never again be dishonest.





Double Record

Innessa Kravets of Kiev, U.S.S.R., set a world record in women's triple jump in Moscow on June 10, by clearing 14.95 metres, which was 14cm more than that of Ling Heng Zhun of China. Incidentally, Kravets also holds the world indoor triple jump record (14.44m) set in Spain in March.

Fastest woman

Merlene Joyce Otley of Jamaica timed 10.78 seconds in 100 metres



in June, to earn the title of the fastest woman in the world

Record, not recorded

Elena Meyer, of South Africa, set a world best time in the women's half marathon, when she slashed more than half-a-minute from the previous record, with a time of 67 minutes 59 seconds. This was in May, breaking the record of 68m 31 sec, set in March 1989 by Ingrid Kristiansen of Norway. As South Africa had been barred from international competition till recently, Elena's record was not recognised.





**TALES FROM MANY LANDS
(ISRAEL)**

THE COBBLER'S MIRACLE

gentle voice said, "Please do come in. A guest is a gift from the Lord."

The king entered and saw a man with a long white beard, sitting by the fireside. His face had a contented look, with bright shining eyes and a quiet smile.

"Welcome, Friend! Today I'm indeed blessed, for I've someone to share my food," he said placing a dishful of tasty items before the surprised king.

After their meal and a good drink of warm fresh milk, they talked about many things. Then the king asked, "My good friend how do you earn your living? What's your trade?"

"I'm only a cobbler," replied the man. "In the morning I go about mending people's shoes. And when evening comes, with all my day's earnings I buy a good meal."

"But what about tomorrow?"

Long, long ago there lived a king who was a just and righteous ruler, ever concerned about the welfare of his people. Every evening, in the disguise of a poor mendicant, he wandered in the streets of his realm, to get to know his subjects better.

One stormy night, he saw a dim light glimmering far away close to a forest. He headed towards it and reached a hut. Songs in praise of God flowed out from it. The king felt happy and was eager to meet the singer.

"Could I have some shelter and a morsel of bread?" he asked, knocking on the door.

The chantings stopped and a



enquired his guest.

*"When the stars begin to
twinkle,*

To God I pray,

*He graciously provides my
needs,*

Day after day!"

sang the happy cobbler.

The king very much enjoyed talking with his host and then took his leave saying he would come again.

The following morning, the royal herald proclaimed with a beating of the drum, that nobody should give his shoes for repair that day.

In the evening, the king again called on the cobbler. He found

him relishing a good meal.

"What did you do today?" he asked.

"My Friend, when I went to the market-place and heard the royal proclamation, I stitched clothes for some of the citizens and earned my daily bread," replied the old man.

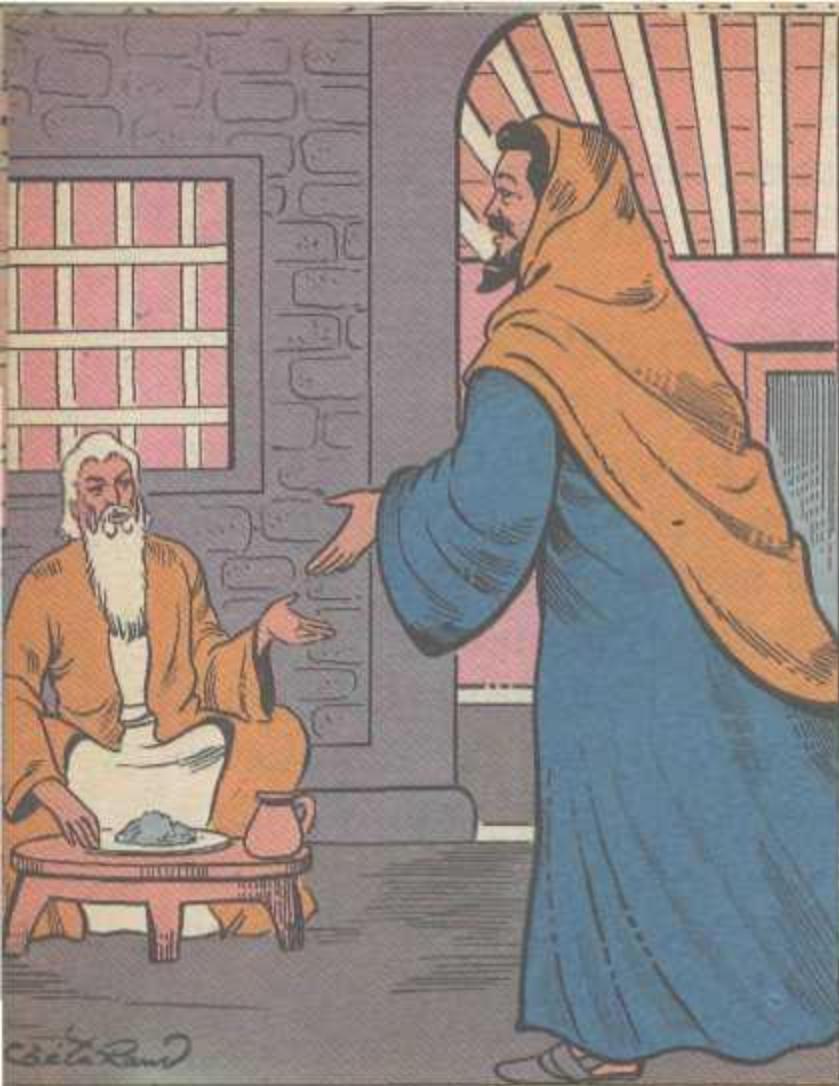
"Oh!" exclaimed the king. "When I heard the announcement myself, I was so very anxious about you! But, what would you do if even stitching were to be forbidden?"

The cobbler forthwith replied,

*"When the stars begin to
twinkle,*

To God I pray,





*He graciously provides my
needs,
Day after day!"*

The king returned to his palace and the next day prohibited tailoring work of any sorts. When he visited the cobbler in the evening, he found him eating, drinking, and enjoying life as before.

"How did you earn your living today?" he asked, greeting him.

"I cut wood in the forest and sold them in the market," answered his host.

The king asked, "What if chopping of wood is also prohibited?"

*"When the stars begin to
twinkle,
To God I pray,
He graciously provides my
needs,
Day after day!"*

sang the cobbler with a smile.

The two passed their time most pleasantly, talking and chatting about deeper as well as lighter sides of life. Then the king took his leave, but promised to come again.

The following morning, the realm, resounded with drumbeats. The royal herald musically proclaimed,

*"Hearken! Hearken! O
Woodchoppers,
You frighten away the
grasshoppers.
Restrain from chopping wood,
Take heed for your own
good."*

In the evening, the king was back with the cobbler.

"Dear Friend," he asked, "how has your God helped you today? Through what trade did you earn your daily bread?"

"I joined the king's army. They put me as a guard at the palace gate. But they said I'll be paid only at the end of the month," replied the old man.



"I feel so sorry for you," said the king.

"But," laughed the cobbler, "evening came and I pledged the steel sword with a merchant. The money I received for it bought me a sumptuous dinner. I've fixed a wooden sword to the hilt. That's what the sheath contains!"

"What if there is a thorough inspection by your captain?" asked the king.

The cobbler repeated his favourite verse.

The king left him, engrossed in deep thought.

The following day, while reviewing his soldiers, the captain told the cobbler, "You'll have to execute a prisoner with your sword. There he is!"

"But I've never harmed even a wee mouse in my life! How then can I kill a human being?" pleaded the new guard, quite nervous.

"You'll have to do your duty. It's an order," sternly answered the officer. "Don't delay."

A crowd had already gathered before the platform meant for the execution. The trumpeters announced the arrival of the king. All waited with bated breath for the officer to give the



signal. The cobbler was seen climbing the stage with unsteady steps.

"Behead!" the captain thundered splitting everyone's ears.

The executioner stood motionless for a while and then raising his hands, looked up towards the heaven. "O God Almighty! I hope you can hear me there. I'm a humble cobbler. If this man kneeling before me is destined to die, and that too with my hands, then let it be so. But if this man deserves to live, let the steel blade turn into wood!" He then took hold of the hilt with one hand and the sheath with the other.



There followed complete silence. So quiet it was that it seemed one could faintly hear even the footfalls of the tiny ants. All eyes stared at the guard's hand gripping the hilt of the sword. Only the king sat relaxed with a smile on his face.

The cobbler drew the sword. Lo and behold, the blade was of wood! Everyone looked on in utter amazement.

The king went up to the cobbler and said, "So, dear Friend, your God has indeed rescued you again!"

The man at once recognised the voice of his nightly visitor. Bowing, he answered in a gentle tone, "Yes, Your Majesty! When

I was ordered to behead the prisoner, I silently prayed to God. Then the words I uttered were those that just spontaneously flowed out of my mouth."

The king understood and embraced the humble man. There and then, before his assembled subjects, he made an announcement: "My people, so long we did not know of such a gem of a man living amongst us. He is a simple cobbler, but from today he is appointed my adviser."

There was much rejoicing. The good cobbler, despite his high position, continued to lead a modest life and never forgot to pray.

Retold by Anup Kishore Das

CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-35



DEITIES OF INDIA

KALI

Daring in their concepts and ideas, the Rishis of yore saw the Divine Mother not only as serene and peaceful, but also as terrible when she decides to destroy the forces of falsehood and evil. Kali or Mahakali is that aspect of the Divinity. The Divine's will is at work not only in the process of creation, but also in the process of destruction.

She is projected as dark, four-handed, and wearing a tiger-skin and a garland of skulls. But behind this awe-inspiring figure, a devotee, who worships Her with a child's intense faith in its mother, can see the image of Grace and Compassion.

The annual celebration of the advent of Mother Kali takes place close to the festive Diwali.



GRADUATE AT 13

An Indian boy has created records—and thus made history, too, in the U.S.A. He is Balamurali Krishna Ambati, who has been awarded the bachelor's degree in Biology by New York University. He is only 13 years old. In the University's 160 year-history, he is the youngest graduate.

The convocation in May was attended by over 10,000 degree recipients, their parents and friends. Bala received, besides the Degree Certificate, a ceremonial silver torch.

Both his parents are teachers in India. They encouraged him in "a most creative way" right from his childhood. They had a strong reason for that: Bala had mas-

tered the basics of calculus when he was barely four!

When he was 11, he and his brother Jayakrishna Ambati, who is six years older than Bala, published a book on AIDS—another record.

That was the time when he applied for admission to New York University. He described himself as a "prodigy with a purpose."

And what was that? To get a doctor's degree before he is 18, and to break the record currently held by an Israeli, who became the world's youngest doctor when he was 18.

The young medico is already on a race against time! Shall we say, Best of Luck!

DO YOU KNOW?

1. Which ancient Indian mathematician invented Zero?
2. A seahorse is not a horse. What is it?
3. What was Tokyo's earlier name?
4. A Roman coin struck by Constantine in 312 A.D. remained in circulation for 14 centuries. What was the coin?
5. Which is the world's biggest library?
6. Which king was born in Europe, died in Asia, and was buried in Africa?
7. Which of Shakespeare's plays is the longest?
8. One country has its geographical outline on its flag. Which?
9. Edmund Hillary and Tensing Norgay raised four flags atop Mount Everest when they conquered it. Which were the flags?
10. A device invented by Henry Archer is used by the press printing postage stamps. What is it called?
11. What was Galileo's first scientific discovery?
12. What was Charles Darwin's subject of study in Cambridge for his graduation?
13. Which U.S. President was the first to visit India?
14. How long does the earth take to complete one revolution around the sun?
15. What is Everest largely made of?

ANSWERS

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Aryabhata | 2. It is a sea fish with horse-shaped head, and swims in a vertical position. | 3. Edo | 4. The Solids | 5. The Lenin State Library in Moscow | 6. Alexander the Great was born in Macedonia, Greece in Europe, he died in Babylon near Baghdad in Asia, and was buried in Alexandria, Egypt which is in Africa. |
| 7. Hamlet, which has over 29,500 words. | 8. Cyprus | 9. The U.N., Great Britain, Nepal, and India. | 10. The perforating machine | 11. The pendulum | 12. Theology |
| 13. Dwight D. Eisenhower—in 1956 | 14. 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes and 46 seconds | 15. Limestone. | | | |



SOS from London Zoo:

The 160-year-old London Zoo, which is the world's oldest, is passing through bad times. It suffered heavy losses in the past two years, and needs some £ 40 million to ensure its survival. The British Government has not so far responded. The zoo authorities have, therefore, invited animal lovers all over the world especially

known language in the world. But Aramaic, the language in which Jesus Christ preached is almost extinct and is spoken by only a few thousand people in Syria, in and around the town of Maaloula, north of Damascus. As it has no alphabet, nobody can read or write it. The language has managed to survive because it is now being taught verbally, while Arabic remains the official language, along with Syriac and Hebrew.

Bovine prize for golf:

In a golf tournament in Malaysia, no prize money was awarded, nor any trophy given. The champion was given a cow, while the second and

NEWS FLASH

children who maintain piggy-banks—to help it with contributions. Alternatively, the zoo will have to close down, with some of the smaller animals going to other zoos and the heavier ones being "sent to their heavenly homes."

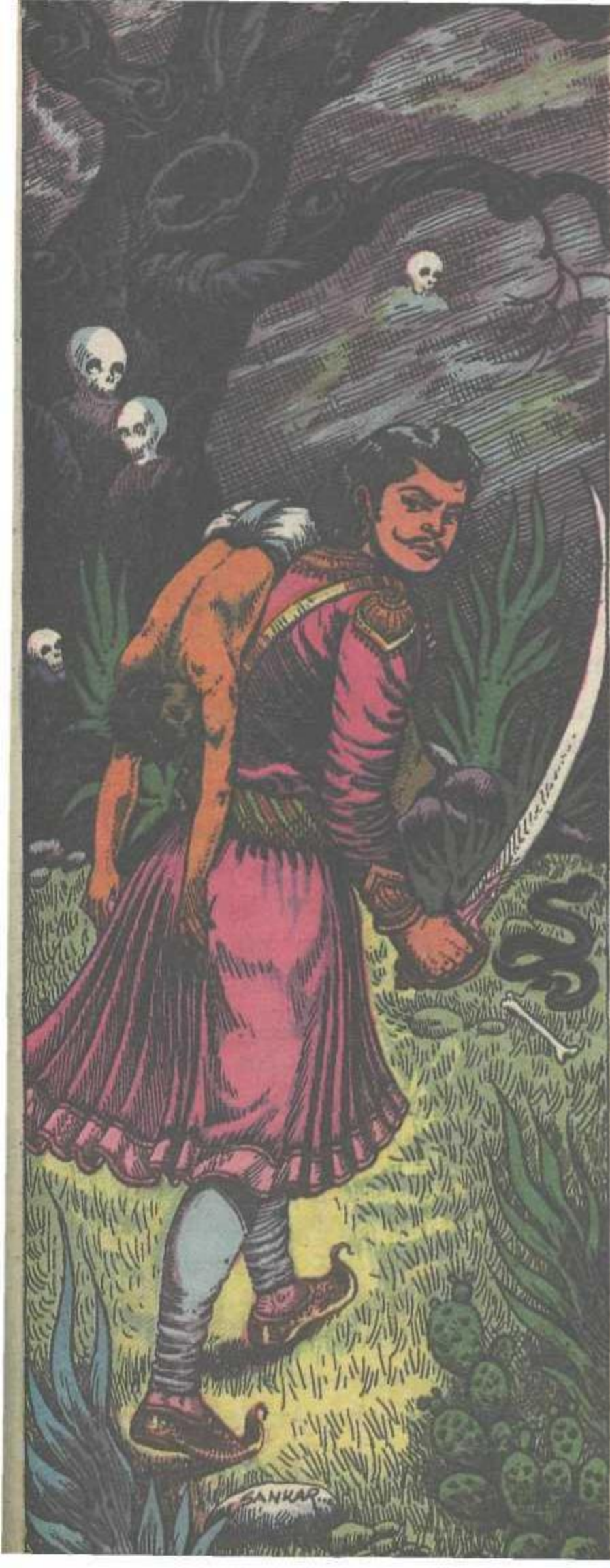
Lord's language:

The Bible contains the Lord's words, and it has been translated into every



third prizes were sheep, and the fourth and fifth prize winners received pairs of rabbits! For the player, who would score a hole-in-one, the prize was a horse plus a 4-wheel drive vehicle. There was nobody to claim it. The unique idea was promoted by the Agriculture Minister, who wanted the players of this rich man's game to get closer to agriculture.



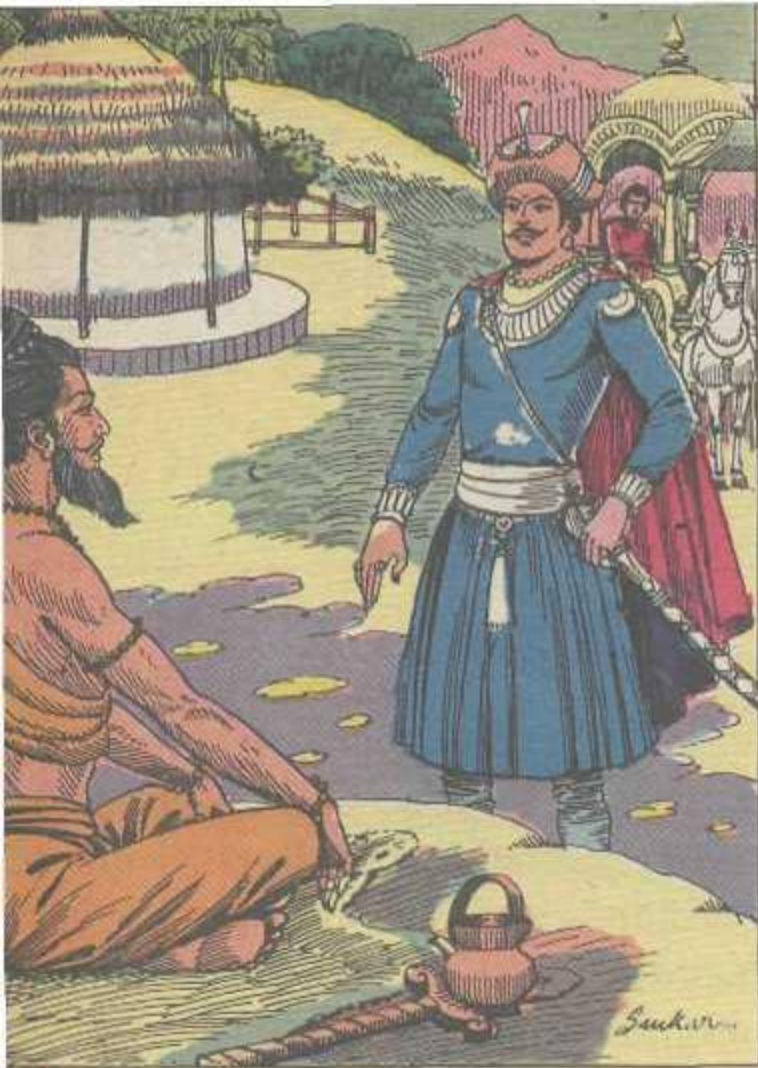


New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

THE TEACHER'S FEES

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O king, you seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite so as to achieve something. Sure as anything, you'll have to undergo a lot of trials and difficulties before you achieve your objective. I shall tell you the story of Atmananda to enable you to



understand what I'm aiming at." The vampire then started his narration.

Dharmapuri was ruled by Simhasenan. His only son was Jayasenan. He was keen that the little prince received the best of education. Simhasenan began a search for the best Guru in the kingdom under whom his son could pursue his studies. He had heard of a sage called Atmananda who was running a school in his ashram. The king went to him and told the sage haughtily, "I hope I don't need an introduction. I'm the King of Dharmapuri. This is my only son Jayase-

nan. I'm giving you the golden opportunity of becoming his teacher."

Maharshi Atmanada looked at the king from head to foot and said, "I don't discriminate between a prince and a pauper. Everybody is equal for me. You hinted that I should consider myself fortunate in having your son as my student. As I haven't yet accepted him as my student, don't you think you arrived at that assumption rather too soon?"

Simhasenan was upset by Atmananda's reasoning. His eyes turned red with anger. Arrogant that he was, Simhasenan could not control his anger. A poor sanyasi talking like that to the ruler of the land? No, no, his audacity should not be brooked.

Atmananda was all the while watching the reaction on the king's face. However, he kept silent, and merely smiled at the king. That made Simhasenan boil all over. "Remember, it's the king himself who is commanding, and as a citizen it's your duty to abide by whatever I say."

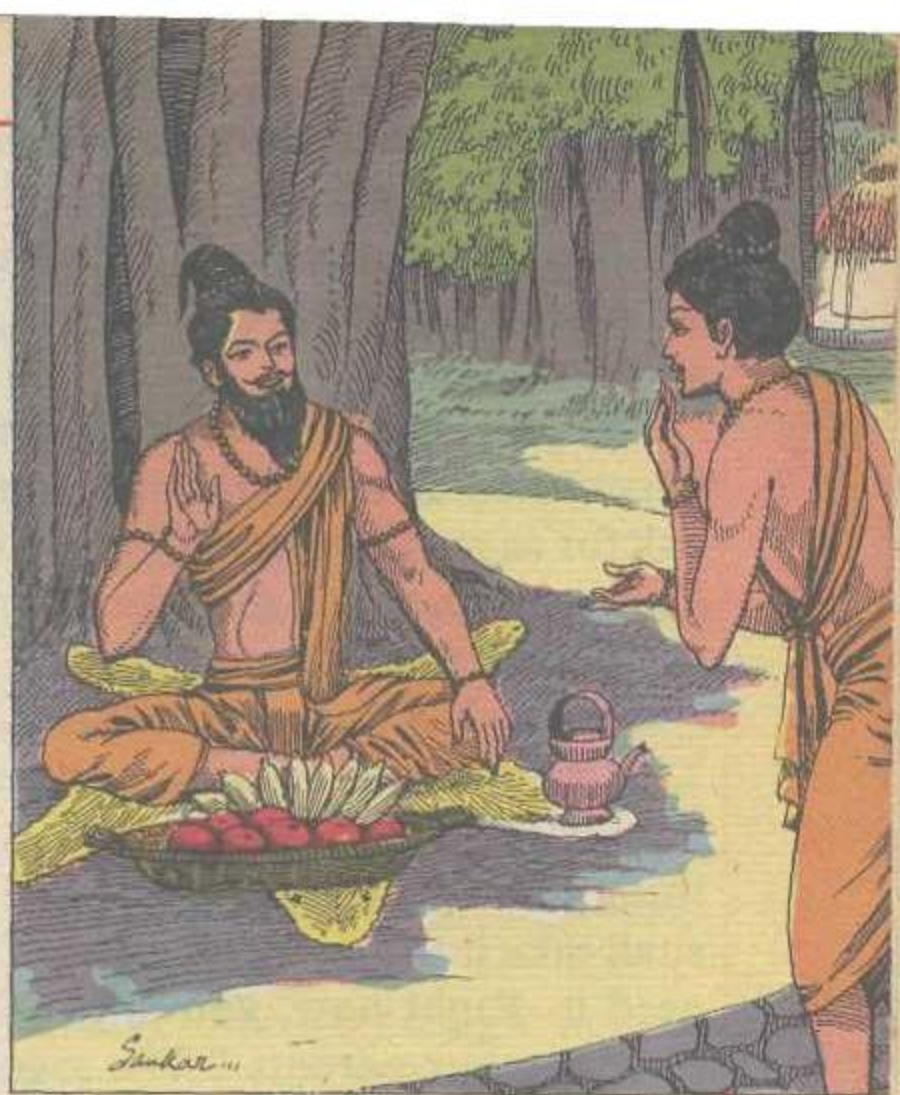
"You don't have to remind me again and again who you are!" the sage protested. "What you



wish is that I should teach your son, isn't it? You could have very well said so more courteously, and I would have readily agreed. I may still accept him as my disciple for his sake, for his future, despite your attitude. But let me remind you, he should not expect any privileges here just because he is a royal prince. He will be treated like any other disciple.

The king was put out. What! His son, a prince, to lead the life of an ordinary person? An equal with all the other students of the ashram school? Wasn't it an insult to the royal dynasty? Simhasenan realised that there was no alternative. After all, if the prince had to receive education from a good teacher, he would have to submit himself to the conditions laid down by the guru. The king, therefore, decided not to give vent to his feelings but to accept Atmananda's conditions and await an opportunity to teach the guru a lesson!

He controlled his anger and told Atmananda, "I don't think we should continue the argument. Now that you've agreed to accept my son as your disciple,



I'm satisfied." He left Jayasenan in the ashram and returned to his palace.

The little prince remained in the ashram till he was fifteen years of age. He stayed with the other students, sharing all the comforts as well as inconveniences of a life in an ashram. He learnt all the arts and the use of arms. Atmananda one day called him to his side and told him "Son, you've completed your education and it's time you went back to the capital."

Jayasenan said respectfully, "My most revered guru! It's my wish that I paid you your fees.

May I know what *guru-dakshina* you would wish from me?"

"No, Jayasenan, I don't wish to take any *dakshina* from you", said the sage.

"No, Sir, that'll be unfair. I am eager to offer anything that you ask for as my *dakshina*. Please be kind enough to tell me what you really wish for."

To which Atmananda replied, "All right. Just because you're insistent, I shall accept something from you. But not now. I shall take it from you whenever I need it. Right now, you may go back to your parents." The sage then blessed the prince before he took leave of the ashram.

Simhasenan was very happy to see his son, now grown into a handsome young man. But he still remembered how he was treated by Atmananda when he went to leave the prince in the ashram. He now thought of revenge. He called for his army commander and ordered, "Take some soliders with you and go to Atmananda's ashram. Ask him to come here and fall at my feet in obeisance to me. If he were to refuse, see that his ashram is reduced to ashes."

The army chief went to the ashram and conveyed the king's message to the sage. Atmananda told him, "I shall not do anything



like that. The king seems to be intoxicated from his arrogance!"

The army commander then asked his soldiers to set fire to the ashram, which in no time was turned to mere ashes. When the king was told how the sage had reacted to his order, he wanted to make Atmananda obey his wishes by hook or by crook. He started for the place where the ashram stood earlier, and was glad at what he saw there. He was happier still when he saw the sage sitting under a tree.

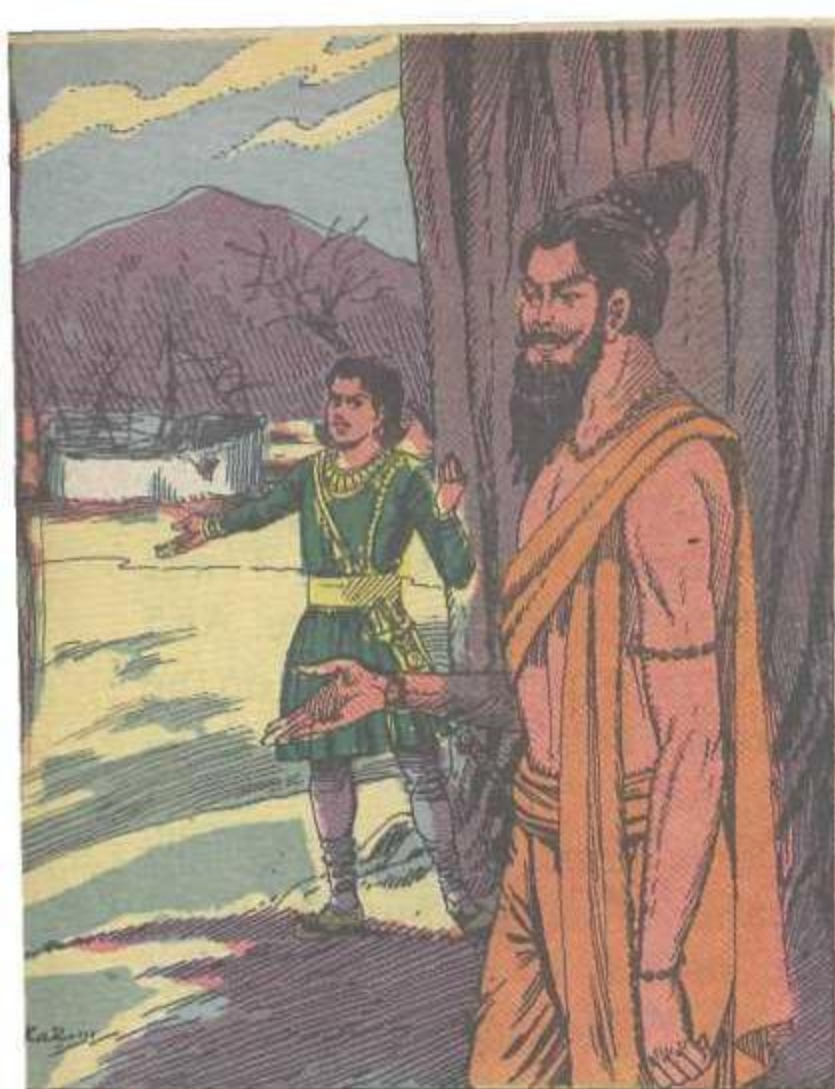
Simhasenan went up to him. "Do you recall what you told me that day—that a prince and pauper would be the same for

you? Perhaps you now have some idea of what I'm capable of, don't you? If I so decide, I can even order your death!" The king gloated over his strength and prowess.

"You're a fool, O king," said Atmananda. "That day, I was reacting to your arrogance. And you've now turned your ire on the ashram. You can't do anything more to me."

"You mean to say I'm not capable of worse things? I shall put an end to your life immediately!" The king caught hold of his bow and shot an arrow at the sage. Atmananda merely stared at the arrow and it got burnt.





Simhasenan tried to send two more arrows, but both were burnt while airborne. The king suddenly mounted his horse and rode away.

A few days later, Jayasenan was crowned king, and before he ascended the throne of Dharmapuri, he wanted to seek the blessings of his guru. He proceeded to the ashram. But he was really shocked to see the whole place reduced to ashes. And he saw Atmananda beneath a tree in deep meditation. Jayasenan went up to him and made his obeisance.

"Most revered teacher! I'm

soon to ascend the throne, and I've come to seek your blessings. But what do I see here? How did it happen? Who was responsible for this heinous crime? Whoever it is, I shall not spare his life!" said Jayasenan excitedly.

Atmananda then told him calmly, "My son! You've gone to the extent of taking a vow, even without waiting to know who had done it. If I were to disclose the name, you may take back your vow."

"Once taken, I shall not withdraw my vow, that's certain," said Jayasenan determinedly. "Whoever it is, do tell me, I shall not have any sympathy for him."

"He's none else than your own father," said the sage with a smile.

"My father, did you say?" Jayasenan could not believe his ears. "And he did this to you—you who had taught me all the good things in life? No, I'm not recognising him as my father, any more. I shall fulfil my vow!"

Atmananda did not wish such a thing to happen and wanted to dissuade Jayasenan from carrying out his decision. "My son, you remember you wanted to give me my *guru-dakshina*,

and I told you I shall ask for it one day? I think that day has come."

Jayasenana was happy that he could now pay his guru whatever was due from him. "My revered guru, please don't hesitate to let me know your wish. Whatever you ask for is yours."

Atmananda took a deep breath and said, "All right. I ask for the life of your father!" Jayasenana knew what his guru was trying to tell him. He fell at his guru's feet, shedding tears of joy. He got up, took farewell of Atmananda and went on his way.

The vampire concluded the story there and turned to Vikram. "O king! If he ever wanted, Atmananda could have killed the king by his powers. He desisted from it. When Jayasenana took a vow to kill his father for his

crime, the sage prevented him and instead asked for his life as his fees. Was it fair and just? If you won't answer me satisfactorily, need I remind you what'll happen? Your head will blow to pieces!"

King Vikramaditya thought for a while and said, "Atmananda was a seer and held no rancour for even persons who might have harmed him. That's why he saw to it that Simhasenana was unharmed, only his arrows were burnt. If he had asked for the same king's life as his *guru-dakshina*, that only shows what kind of sacrifices sages were prepared to undertake."

The vampire knew that Vikramaditya had outwitted him again. He gave the slip to the king, taking the corpse along with him.



LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE GREAT

The Other Shoe as Well!

Like the infamous 'apartheid' in South Africa, there was much discrimination practised by the white race in America against the blacks there. Martin Luther King (1929-68) was the black leader who launched a movement to fight such discrimination. Baptised Michael, the name was later changed by his father after the German priest and founder of Protestantism. The world fondly remembers him for his relentless fight for human rights and equality.

One day, he was addressing a large gathering. Among the audience was someone who did not subscribe to King's idea of equal treatment to all. The man decided to register his protest by hurling a shoe at the black leader. As it missed its target and fell down on the dais, there arose an uproar among the audience. While the organisers were panicky, Martin Luther King kept his cool. Picking up the shoe, he said, politely, "This is a great country where people worry so much about their servants. Someone generous has set an example by throwing his shoe for a person like me who walks barefoot, as I can't afford any footwear. May I request the kind-hearted gentleman to throw me the other shoe also? He would really be obliging me if he does so."

There was pindrop silence for a while. Then the crowd burst into a loud applause. There was a broad smile on Martin Luther King's face.



Martin Luther King



VEER HANUMAN

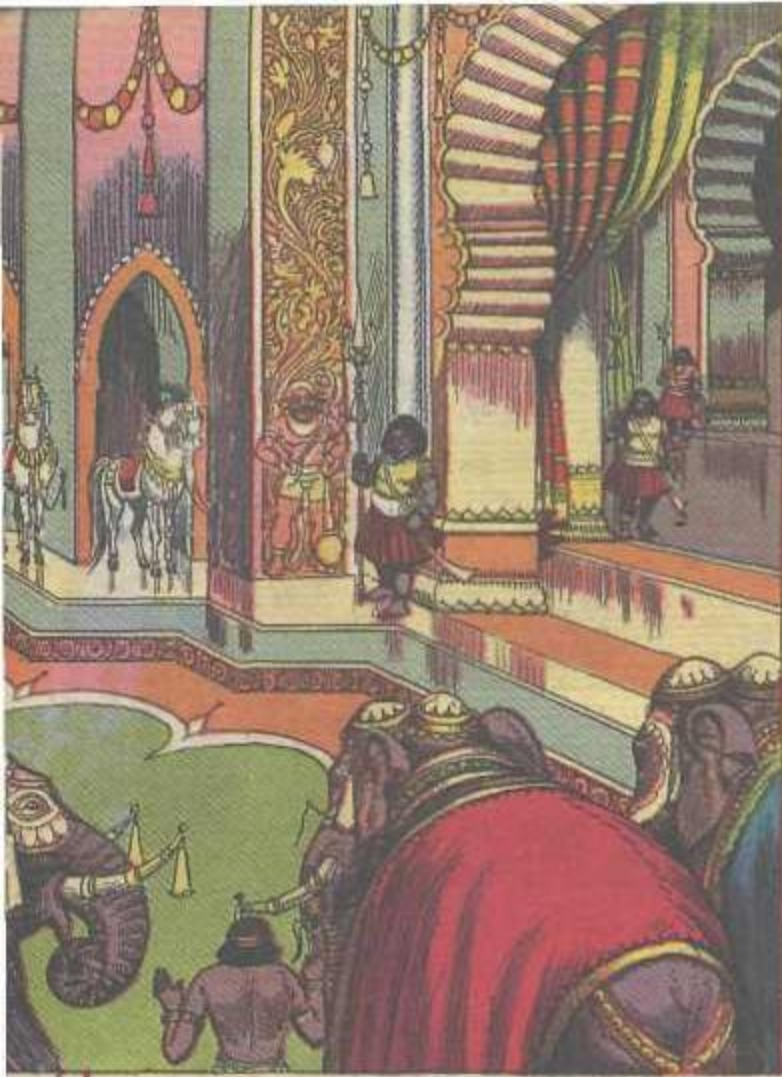
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(Excusing himself of the hospitality of Mount Mainak, Hanuman hurries towards Lanka, crossing all hurdless on the way. He is stopped at the portals by Lankini, whom he overpowers to gain entry into the city. He searches everywhere for Sita Devi.)

After putting an end to Lankini, the spirit guarding the city, Hanuman did not lose time to enter Lanka. Once inside, he could see the activities of the demons. Some were busy performing *yagnas*, while others were busy at some mysterious rites to seek the destruction of enemies. The demons wore var-

ious kinds of dresses, each looking different from the other. Some of them had mounds of locks on their heads, while others had their heads shorn of all hair. Some of the demons were quite tall, with huge ears—even as big as those of elephants. A few looked like dwarfs. While many of them had clad themselves in

THE SEARCH ENDS



animal skins, some were bejewelled and had put on colourful pastes on their faces and arms.

The night was coming to an end. A bright moon hung over the city. Hanuman stealthily made his way to the palace of Ravana. Most of the demonesses were asleep in their apartments. Some were still engrossed in singing and dancing, and a few were chit-chatting with their paramours.

Hanuman observed each one of the women with great attention. But none of them appeared to him to be Sita Devi. He was worried. Where would he find

her? He made another rapid survey of the city and entered the palace again.

Ravana's palace looked magnificent, comparable only to Indra's abode in heaven, Alakapuri. The walls were studded with jewels. There were several colourful arches and gates. The palace was guarded by hefty-looking demons who never slackened their vigil. A portion of the palace housed the elephants and horses, which were looked after very well. Some other parts were occupied by demons. The whole palace had an air of affluence and happiness.

Hanuman entered each and every apartment and noticed its grandeur. The doors and windows were embossed with flowers and leaves of gold. Golden creepers entwined the pillars. In one corner, Hanuman saw Ravana's famous flying chariot, the *Pushpaka Vimana*. It had once belonged to the god, Kubera, and was remarkable for the intricate work seen all over it.

All these beauteous sights could not make Hanuman forget for a moment the purpose of his mission. As time passed and he was yet to find Sita Devi, he felt

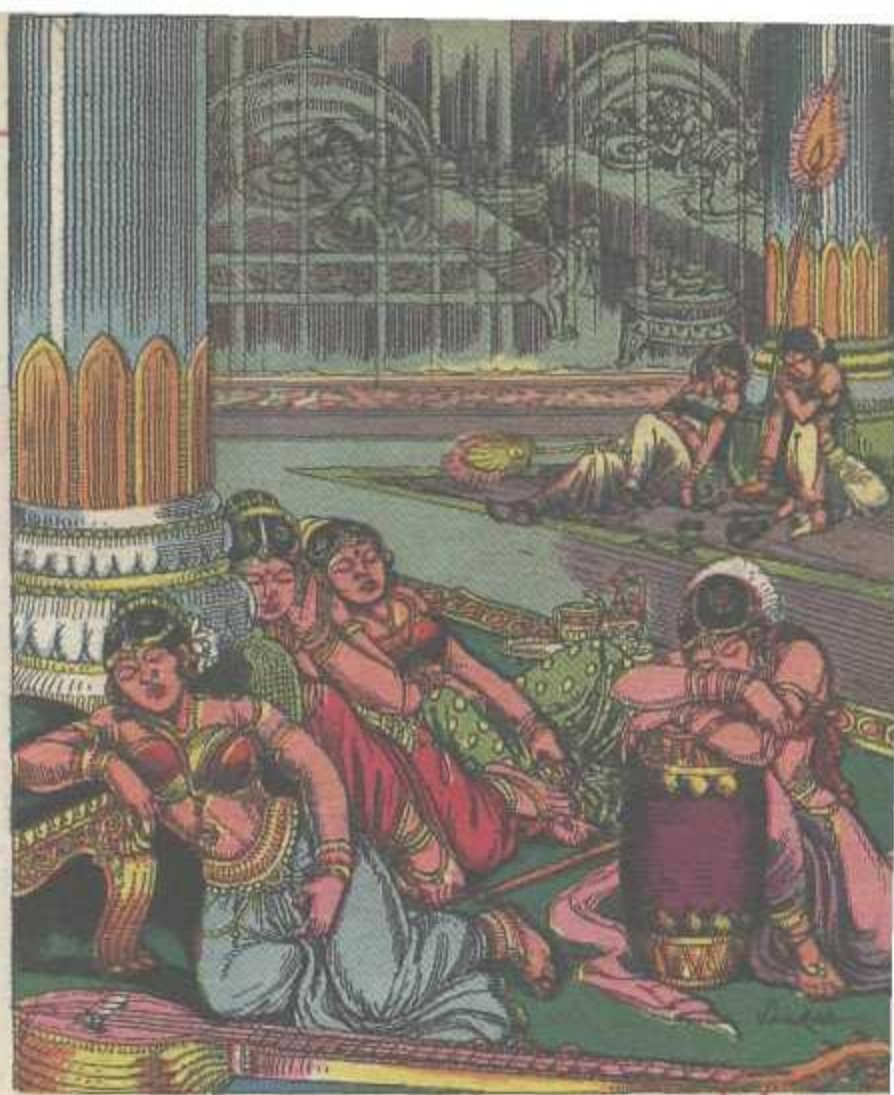


more and more depressed.

At last he entered the apartments where the wives of Ravana lived. There were those whom Ravana had married; those women who had been taken by force by him; and those who had come there of their own wishing to be his wives. The rooms were flood-lit by bejewelled lamps. Hanuman could see them scattered in their rooms. Evidently, they were in a stupor from heavy drinking. They wore dazzling ornaments and garlands made of sweet-smelling flowers.

Soon Hanuman saw where Ravana was sleeping. His body looked like a rock and his outstretched hands lay like a pair of gigantic snakes with five hoods each. His body was smeared with red sandalwood paste. He, too, wore ornaments studded with precious stones.

On an adjoining bed lay his wife, Mandodari. She looked so beautiful that, for a moment, Hanuman wondered whether she was Sita Devi. But on second thoughts he realised he was wrong. She would not be enjoying such comfortable sleep in captivity. How could she care to wear ornaments when she was

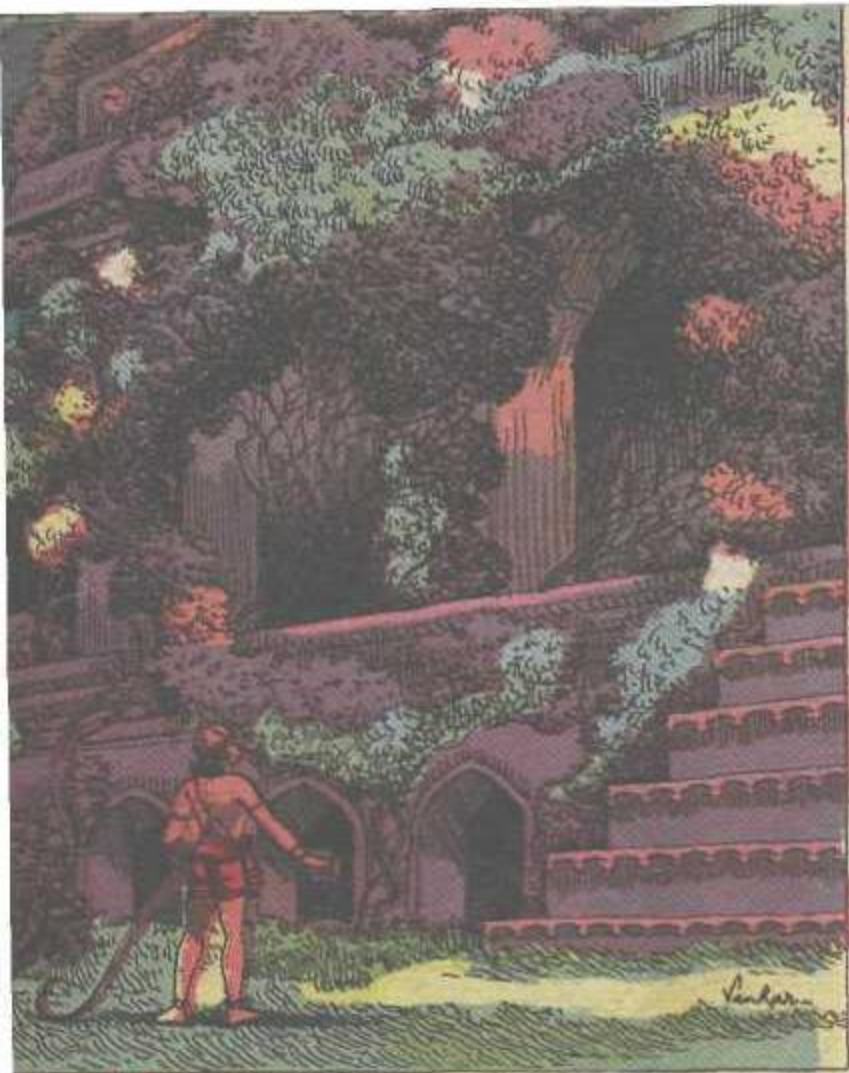


separated from her husband, Rama? No, this lady could not be Sita Devi, he argued and left the apartment.

One after another, Hanuman searched all the apartments of the palace. He did not leave out even the music rooms and theatres. Suddenly, a painful doubt crept into his mind; would Sita Devi have put an end to her life? Or had Ravana killed her? Or would she have died of fear and anxiety?

Hanuman was carried away by a feeling of remorse. How could he face his comrades if he were to go back without success? What reply would he give if they were





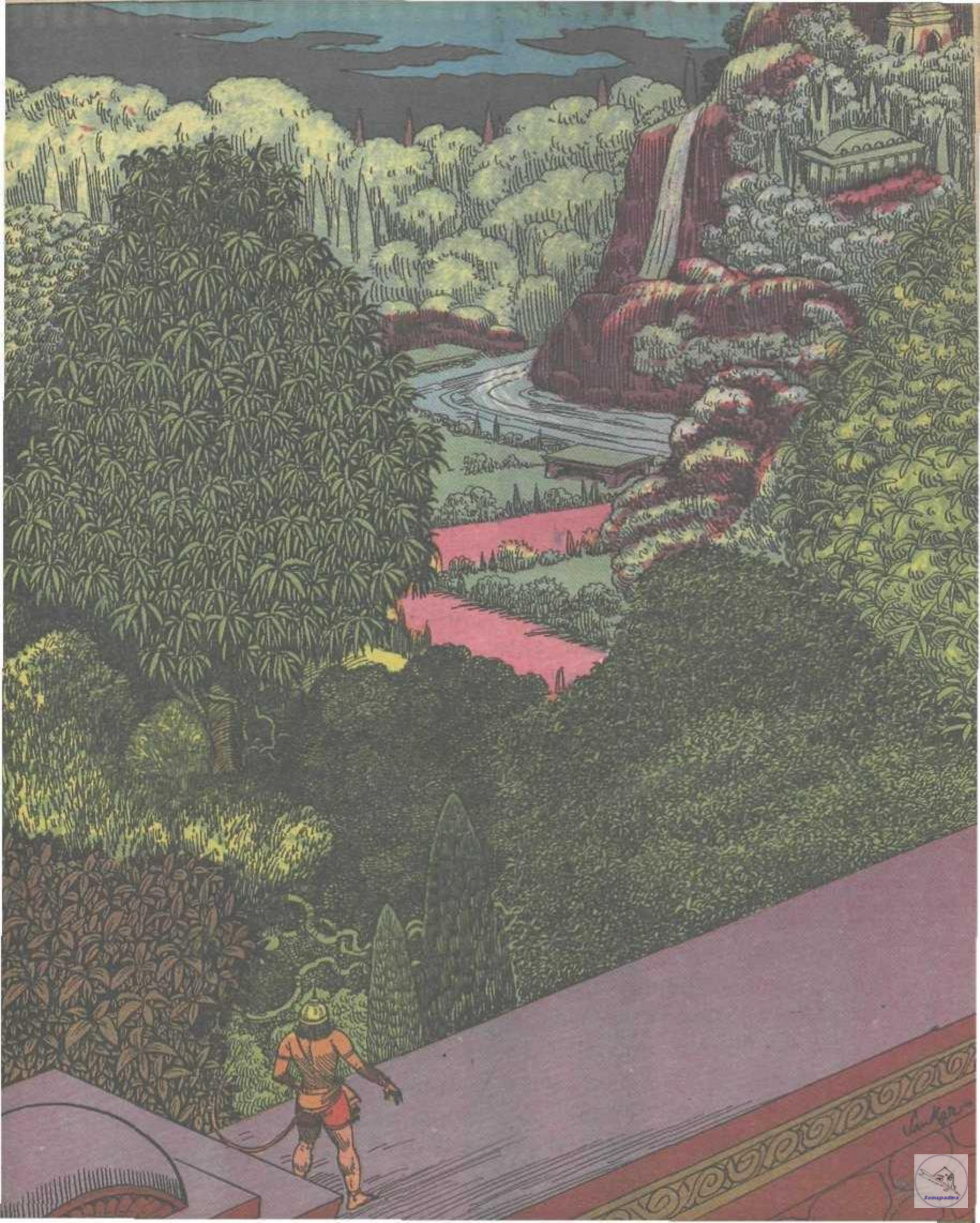
to question him about his promise to find Sita Devi? Hanuman brooded over these questions. 'Let me not waste my time worrying,' he told himself. With redoubled vigour, he went out into areas skirting the city. He climbed the hills and entered the caves. He did not forget to explore the underground chambers. He entered bushes and looked into wells and ponds. Wherever he found a deserted dwelling, he went inside and examined it thoroughly. Sita Devi was nowhere to be found.

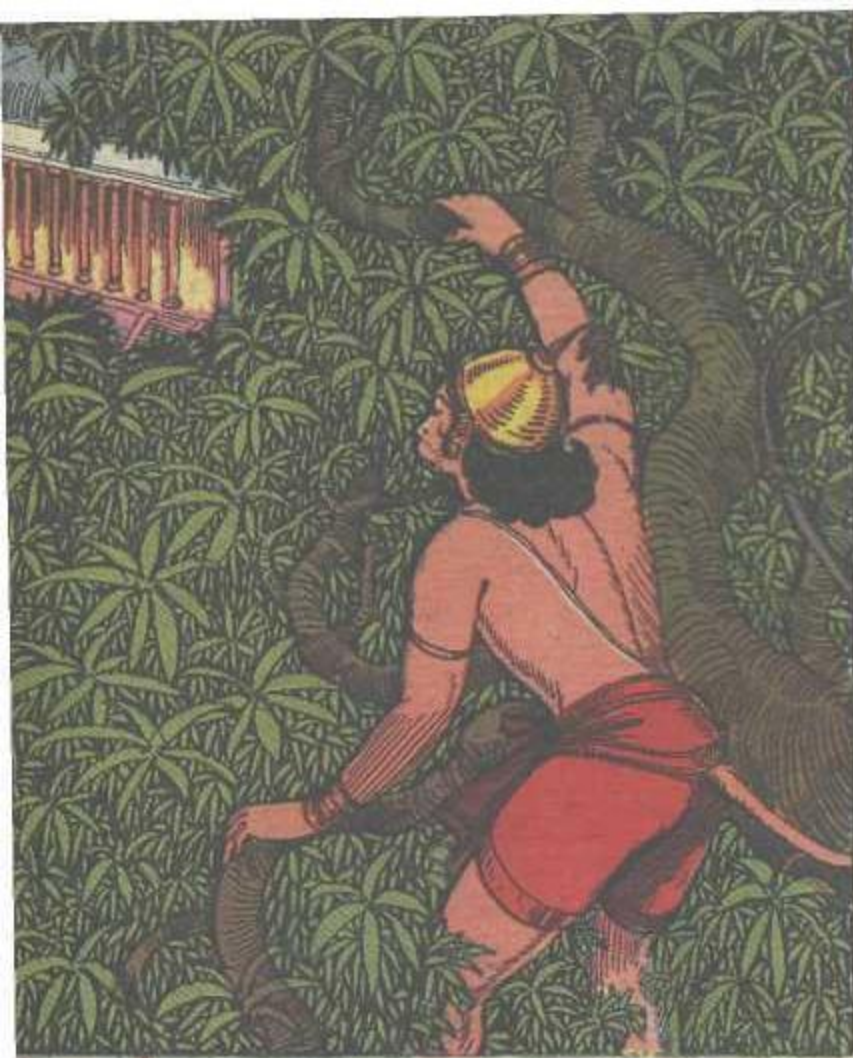
In despair Hanuman thought, as he was unable to trace Sita

Devi, it would be fitting for him if he lit a pyre on the seashore and threw himself into it. But he thought again: 'If that be my fate, I shall certainly die. But should I die before I kill Ravana or capture him and take him to Rama?'

As he churned these thoughts in his mind, he suddenly saw a garden which he had not noticed earlier. It was full of *Ashoka* trees. He went towards the garden. He made himself light and climbed one tree after another. The garden looked beautiful with flowers of a myriad of colours. As it was spring time, the garden looked especially lovely. Sweet fragrance filled the air all around. Dainty creepers and delicate shrubs grew amidst the big trees.

As Hanuman jumped from branch to branch, the birds awoke in their nests and began chattering. Flowers from the branches above fell on Hanuman's head. He was amazed to discover that all the trees were not real. In between there were trees made of gold, silver and other precious metals and made to appear natural! He now had no doubt that this garden was





something special.

In a short while, he saw through a clearing a golden castle in the middle of the garden. Situated on a hillock, it was surrounded by high walls. By its side flowed a sweet spring reflecting the dazzling pillars of the castle.

Hanuman went as near the castle as possible and, hiding on a thick-leaved tree, spied into the apartments. Suddenly his eyes were drawn towards a woman sitting alone but encircled by demonesses scattered at some respectable distance. Though sad and emaciated, she looked so

graceful and divine that Hanuman could instantly guess she was none else than Sita Devi.

Her clothes were soiled, and tears continuously rolled down her cheeks. Hanuman had seen Sita Devi while Ravana was taking her in his flying chariot. He had also seen her ornaments which she had thrown down and which Rama had picked up later. Rama had given him a description of the other ornaments she had on her, and when Hanuman saw them on the woman, he had no doubts about her real identity.

Hanuman was overjoyed. At last his mission had succeeded, and he had traced Sita Devi. He felt like shouting and jumping down the tree. But he was wise enough to check himself. He went from one tree to another to observe the demonesses carefully.

By now it was dawn, and Hanuman could hear demon-priests reading from scriptures. As soon as Ravana woke up he remembered Sita Devi. He dressed up and proceeded towards the *Ashoka* garden. A retinue of damsels followed him. Some of them showed him the way with lighted torches with



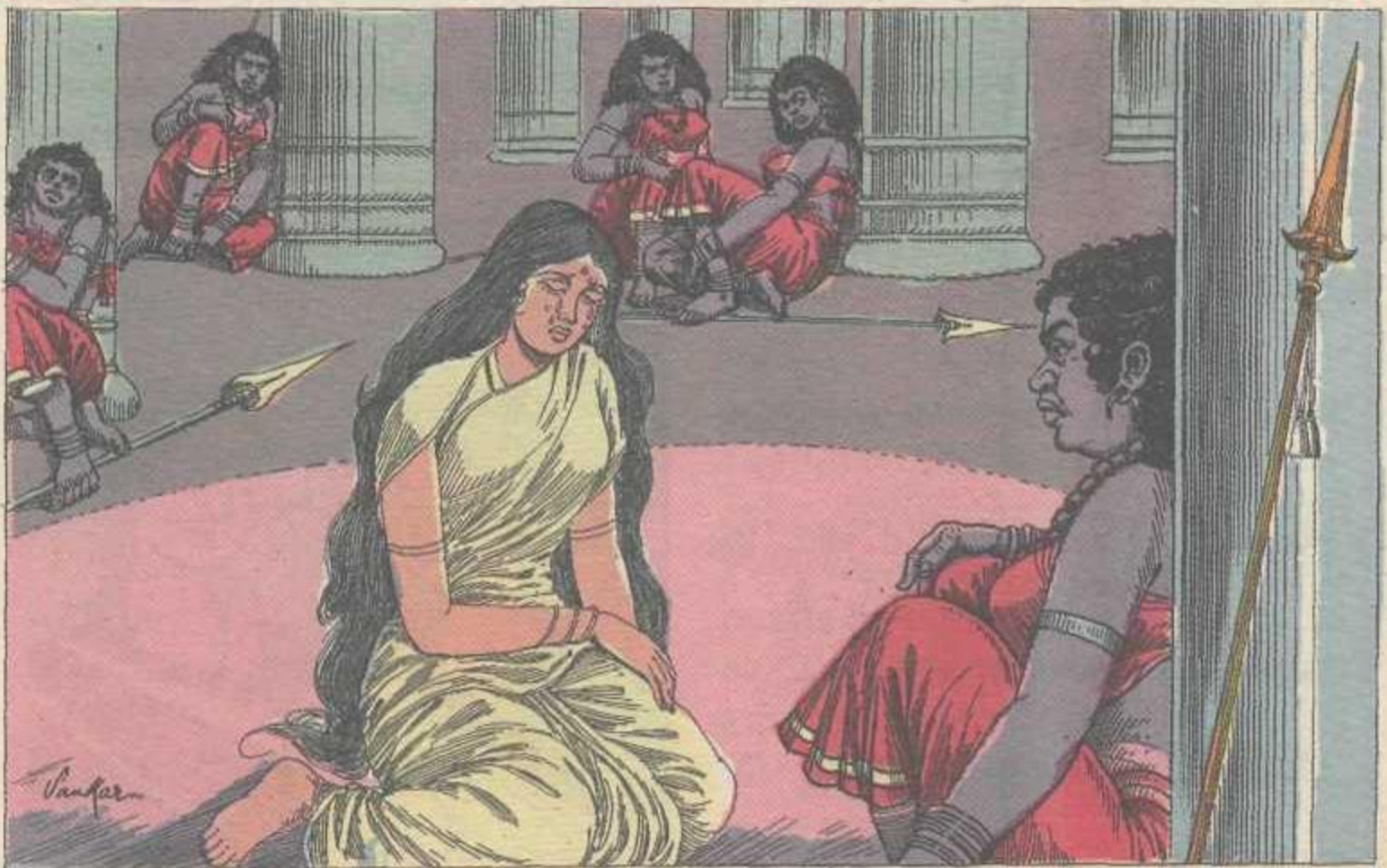
golden handles. One woman held an umbrella over his head. Some acted as his bodyguards.

Hanuman was alerted about the approaching procession by the tinkling anklets worn by the demonesses. He slowly raised his head and peeped, when he saw Ravana coming to where Sita Devi had been held captive. Hanuman came down to a lower branch to get a better sight of what Ravana might do with Sita Devi.

Ravana stopped right in front of Sita Devi. She shivered with fear and hatred at Ravana's presence there. She cast a hurried glance around herself to see if

there was anybody nearby who could come to her rescue. Disappointed, she began to weep.

Fixing his gaze on Sita Devi, who looked sorrow personified, Ravana addressed her: "Sita! What's there to feel so uneasy at my sight? You've captured my heart, and I'm really enamoured of you. You should now accept me and be brave. You've nothing to fear from me or from anybody else. Since you don't love me as yet, I shall not touch you. But I beseech you not to be unfair to yourself by putting on soiled clothes, by not eating anything, and passing sleepless nights. Just accept me, and see how beautiful





and happy your life will prove to be. You can occupy the finest apartment in the palace. You can wear all kinds of lovely dresses and beautiful ornaments, and enjoy the most luxurious food and drinks. You can pass your time in music and entertainment. I'm prepared to make you my chief queen. All the people in the palace will be at your beck and

call. I shall myself be a slave to you. Why should you push away all these wonderful opportunities? It seems you're still thinking of that wanderer, Rama. Let me assure you, he's no more. Even if he is alive, it is impossible for him to find you out. So, be sensible. Forget him for ever, and accept me without any more hesitation.

—To continue

Malati : My brother got a new job yesterday.

Rohini : That's good. What does he do?

Malati : He's connected with the Police department.

Rohini : The police? How?

Malati : By a pair of handcuffs.





A CURE FOR ANGER

If one went by the name, Shantan should have been a man of peace. Unfortunately, he was short-tempered and easily given to anger. He was angry with everybody; he was adamant and nothing would please him or satisfy him. His friends and relatives hoped that he might change once he got married.

Soon Sumathi entered his life as his bride, and as she got ready to go to his house, her people instructed her to remember to put her right foot first as she stepped into the house. However, in her excitement, she completely forgot their advice and entered the door with her left foot forward.

Shantan did not wait for another excuse to get angry. He was furious with her. He violently pulled her back and admonished her in the presence

of everybody. "What's the use of all those instructions given to you?" he growled at her. "Better change your step and your attitude, too. I warn you!"

Sumathi was to get more evidence of his anger and more occasions to be the butt of his temper, too. In the house, she found several plates and tumblers, vessels and other objects either broken or with dent all over. The walls everywhere had cracks and scratches, and the edges of window-sills were all chipped. All vestiges of Shantan's anger, his mother explained to Sumathi apologetically. "When he gets angry, he'll pick up anything he can lay his hands on and will not know what he does with it; we ourselves run away from the room, lest we get hit! Let me caution you, better be alert and careful."



In a few days, Sumathi found him affectionate and full of concern. She wondered, could such a person be given to anger? She wanted to know, and took courage in asking him one day when she saw him alone. But he merely smiled and avoided a direct reply.

Sumathi was an intelligent woman. She knew, it is not advisable to become angry unnecessarily or for petty reasons. She, therefore, decided that she would try her best to change her husband's habit. Whatever happened, she would be unconcerned and feign to be a fool. If he were to use bad language—and he often did—she would turn it

back on him. This strategy, she thought, might succeed.

One day, Shantan came back home hungry. He waited for her to bring his lunch, and Sumathi innocently waited for her husband to ask for it. "Don't stand there like a piece of log; bring me some rice," he said as he sat down on the floor. Very obediently, she went to the kitchen and brought a plate with just two spoons of rice. There was nothing else in the plate.

Shantan glared at her and Sumathi could guess what he meant and what would follow. She told him softly, "You asked for some rice, and that's what I've brought. You didn't tell me



how much or what else. I didn't want to do anything on my own and incur your wrath. If you tell me what exactly you wish to have, I shall go and bring all that."

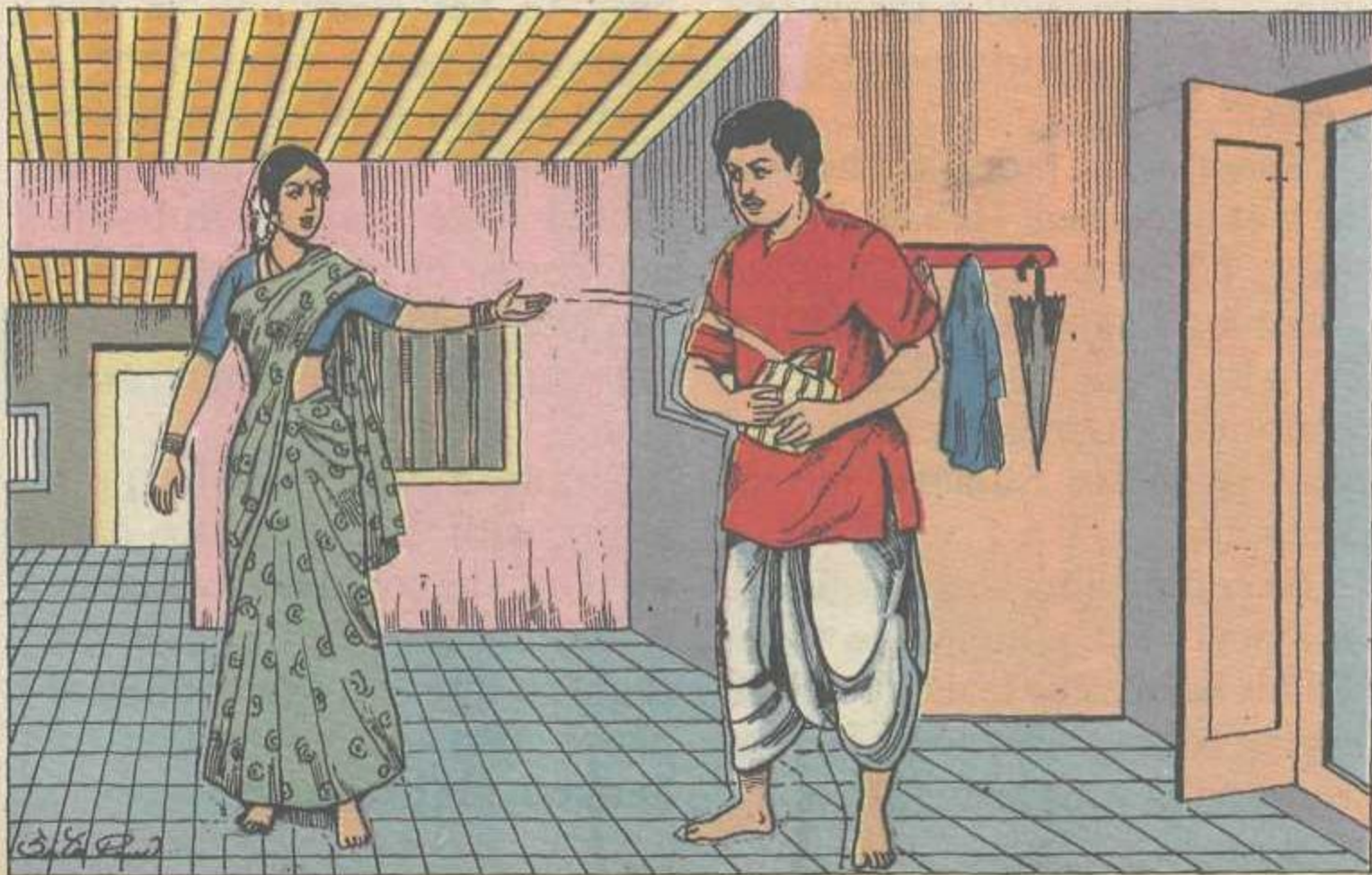
Shantan was silent for some-time. He thought all the while. After all, Sumathi had a point and she was honest about it. There was no reason in getting angry with such people, he concluded.

By then Sumathi had brought back the plate with a full meal. After he had eaten and washed his hands, he turned to her. "Don't you know that after I take meals, I've to go for work? Throw me my bag," he said

rather rudely.

Sumathi ran inside and came back with the bag as he was about to put on his sandals and grab the umbrella from its stand. She thought he was in a hurry and threw the bag at him—just as he had told her. "Thup!" The bag hit him on his head. He turned back rubbing his head. "What do you think you were doing, you woman?" he said with uncontrollable anger. To which Sumathi coolly replied, "Look at that! You asked me to throw the bag to you, and that's what I did! Why should you be angry with me?"

"Fool!" Shantan muttered to himself and went out without uttering a word to his wife.





Another day, the husband and wife were alone at home. Sumathi was busy with her chores, while Shantan was doing physical exercises under a tree. Sumathi wanted to empty a bucket of water, full of muck and not fit to be given even to cattle. So, she went up to Shantan and asked him, "Where shall I throw this water? It's too dirty even for the cows."

Shantan did not like the way he was disturbed. He said irritably, "You couldn't think of anything else to ask me? Throw it on my head, if you please!" He continued his exercises, without waiting to see Sumathi retrace her steps.

She did not hesitate for a moment, but poured the water on his head as he leaned forward trying to touch his toes. He was shocked beyond belief. He drew

erect and shouted. "Are you a fool? An ignoramus?"

Sumathi stood her ground and replied, "I thought the water has some medicinal properties, and maybe that's why you wanted it to be poured on your head."

Shantan realised how correct she was and how unfair he had been to her everytime he was angry with her.

He caught hold of her hands and said, "Sorry, Sumathi, I should have been careful with my words, in my speech. No, I can't blame you and I don't have any reason to be angry with you."

Shantan was never again angry with Sumathi. As days went by, she could notice that he would not get angry even at the slightest pretext. Sumathi was happy that she could find an antidote for his anger.

The Tailor's Wishes

Kanakapati was the King of Kantapura. He was a powerful ruler, more famous for his frequent acquisitions to his kingdom than his accomplishments in various arts, including painting and music. Whenever the ruler of a neighbouring state celebrated his birthday, Kanakapati used to send him one of his paintings as a gift. The painting would be packed in a piece of beautiful brocade and carefully carried to that kingdom and taken in a procession to the court on the

day of the celebrations, and presented to the king by a minister from Kantapura.

The kings remembered Kanakapati on *his* birthday and reciprocated with valuable gifts. However, they were all items made as per the orders and directions of the kings concerned—unlike the paintings which were done by Kanakapati himself. The kings, who all appreciated this unique gift from Kanakapati, had great respect for him. All of them except





Simhavarman of Singadurg.

Simhavarman had ascended the throne after killing his uncle, who was the ruler, and banishing the queen and her young son from the land. So, the rulers of the other states did not take kindly towards him and even nursed a fear that he might attack them, if ever he got an opportunity.

Kanakapati, however, wished to befriend Simhavarman and decided to send him a painting when he was moving into his newly-built palace. At the court, when the brocade cover was removed to reveal the painting,

Simhavarman gave it a scornful look and told the minister from Kantapura, "What a gift for the ruler of Singadurg! There's no place to hang this in my palace, so you may take it back with my compliments! And go and tell your king that I may accept his daughter as a gift!"

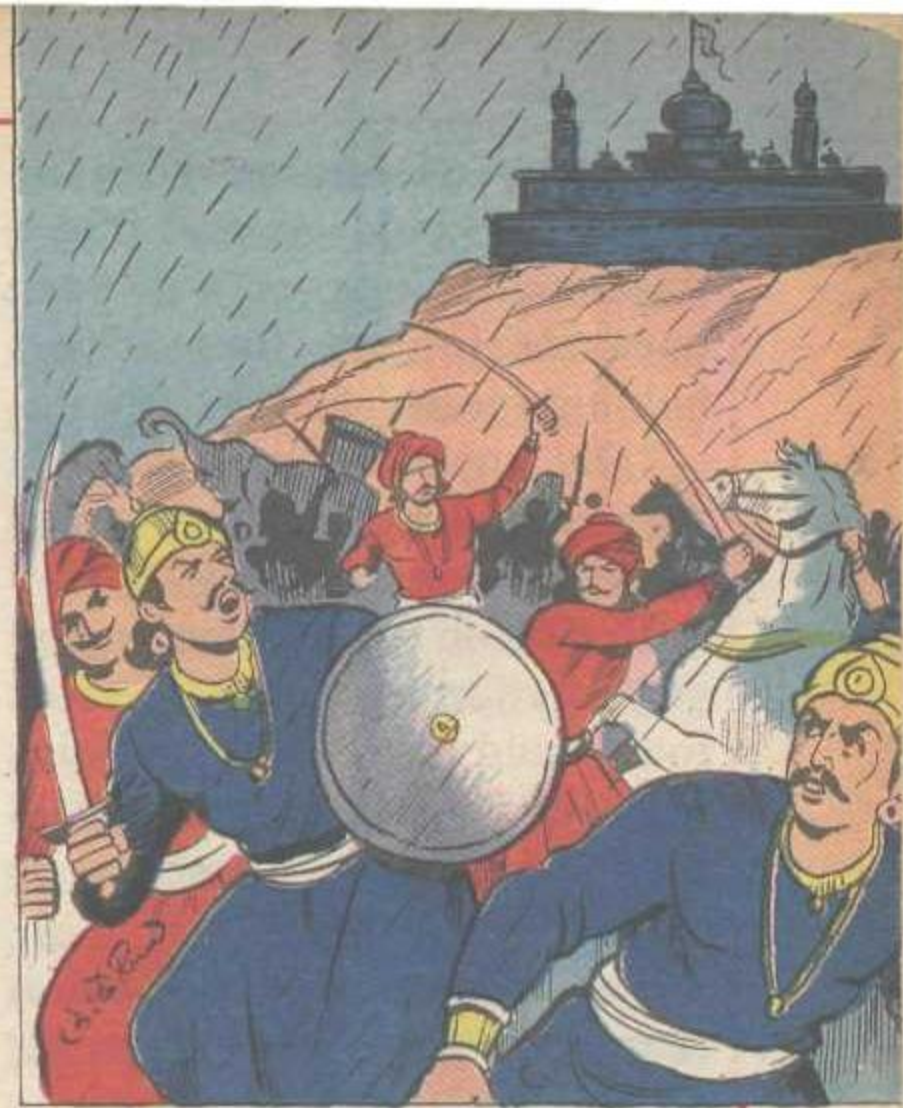
The minister felt insulted, but diplomacy demanded that he kept quiet and not retorted. He thought, it would be better left to his king to decide how to retaliate to the arrogance of Simhavarman. As he was leaving the court, Simhavarman was heard shouting, "You've my permission to go round the palace and see for yourself!"

The poor minister, he did not at all like the patronising behaviour of Simhavarman, and returned to Kantapura, taking back with him the painting. When he reported to Kanakapati all that had happened in Singadurg, the king was furious. Simhavarman had not only had the audacity to refuse his precious gift and ask for his daughter, that too very improperly and impolitely, but had insulted his minister, which was something no king would brook. Kanaka-

pati had no hesitation in deciding that the best way to teach Simhavarman a lesson will be to wage a war and subjugate him. So, he ordered his army to get ready for a battle.

Singadurg was a fortress built on a hill and had all strategical advantages. Kanakapati and his army fought for a few days, but the Kantapura army could not make any gains and soon they became battle-weary. As luck would have it, it began to rain and the downpour continued for days together. Kanakapati decided to retreat for the time being and wait for the weather to improve to attempt another assault on Singadurg.

Simhavarman was cunning enough to take full advantage of the situation, so he asked his soldiers to follow the retreating army and play havoc on them. The Kantapura soliders were soon scattered, as they ran to save their lives without offering any resistance whatsoever. It was then that Kanakapati was isolated. He knew the enemy was close upon his heels and he feared for his life. By then he had reached a village. Without disclosing his identity, he looked



about for a refuge and dashed into a house where a tailor lived.

In a trembling voice he pleaded with the tailor, "Some soldiers are after me. Hide me, quick, otherwise they'll find me and kill me!"

The poor tailor had no idea who the desperate man was and why he should be killed. But he had all sympathy for a fellow being. So he told the stranger, "Get under my bed and don't make any movement."

Kanakapati did as he was advised and got into the only bed he saw there and covered himself with a sheet. The tailor piled two



quilts on him one after the other. Before he could go and find a third quilt, his door was burst open and in came four soldiers holding spears.

"Did anybody come here? Is anyone hiding in here?" they asked the tailor roughly.

The tailor had by then managed to collect his wits. "Which fool would try to come and hide in my house, a poor tailor?" said he, answering a question by counter-question!

The soldiers did not find it funny enough to take him at his word. So, they ran to every corner, peeped through the windows, and ran their hands over

the shelves in his cupboard. No, there was no one hiding anywhere there. To make it doubly sure, each one of them poked the bed several times with his spear as they hurried out of the house.

The tailor waited till the footfalls of the soldiers died down before he removed the quilts so that the stranger could come out of the bed. Kanakapati was looking a deathly pale and was perspiring from head to foot. Once he assured himself he was quite safe, he decided to tell the tailor who he really was. "Would you be surprised to know that I am your king, Kanakapati?" He then explained how he had to run



away from the soldiers of Singadurg. Before long, a group of Kantapura soldiers came that way and hailed their king when they found him safe.

While leaving for his palace, Kanakapati caught hold of the tailor's arms. "You saved me from certain death, and I'm indeed grateful to you. You can ask for three favours; whatever they be, I shall grant them to you."

The tailor had never thought of any rewards for his deed. So, he pondered for a while and then said, "Your Majesty, you've seen how the roof of my house is leaking. I don't have any money

to repair it. Would you please send someone to fix it?"

The king wondered, what had come of the tailor? "You, stupid!" he exclaimed, sounding disappointed. "Is that any great favour that one can ask of a king? Forget it, I shall have the roof fixed. Now think of a second favour and make sure it is really worthwhile."

What on earth could he ask for? The tailor scratched his head, perplexed. After a while, he said humbly, "Your Majesty, I feel ashamed to tell you, but another tailor has taken up his residence at the end of the street, and my patrons have of late





stopped coming to me. If he can be asked to shift from this street, I have a hope, all of them will once again come to me.”

“You’re really a fool!” said the king impatiently. “If you had asked, I would have taken you from here and given you a place near the palace, where you would have attracted more customers. As you wish, I shall see that he goes away from this street. Now you’ve one more favour to ask of me. Remember, I shall not grant you any more wish. So, think deeply before you make your decision.”

The tailor looked at the roof,

his eyes wandered along the walls, and then he scanned the entire floor of his little house. Nothing struck him that he would need for the house. Still he thought and thought. Suddenly his face brightened up. “Your Majesty, I hope you won’t take it amiss, but I’m keen to know how you felt when the soldiers poked their spears through the quilts.”

The mention of the soldiers brought back to Kanakapati memories of his retreat from Singadurg—in fact, the first ever time he had to face failure in any of his adventurous missions to bring the neighbouring kingdoms under his suzerainty. Was the tailor trying to make fun of him?

“Blockhead! How dare you put such a question to the king? I’m not going to forgive you for your insolence and shall have you put in irons and led to the gallows!”

Kanakapati promptly marched out of the house, after instructing his soliders to take the tailor to the prison.

Alone in his cell, the tailor could not get a wink of sleep.



After all, what did he ask of the king whose life he had saved? It was a very innocent question, and there was nothing in it to send the king to such a rage as to order an end to *his* life.

The next morning, he was led to the gallows. Everything was ready for the execution and the executioner was examining the rope for the last time, when a messenger from the king rushed in. "His Majesty, King Kanakapati of Kantapura, has given you his gracious pardon. He has asked me to give you this note."

A deep sigh escaped from the quivering lips of the tailor. He took the note, spread it out, and read : "You wished to know how I felt under the quilts in your house. You now know, don't you?"

The tailor looked towards the palace and smiled. The king was not devoid of any sense of humour.

Needless to say the tailor was escorted back to his house. On the way, he noticed that the other tailor had already left the street. And at his house, he found the king's men busy replacing the leaking roof. Need he have bothered the king with any other wish?

As for Kanakapati, he decided that friendship with Simhavarman was a better way of winning him over, rather than a war. So, he sent him an invitation to his next birthday celebrations and found that the young king would make a desirable ally. Besides, he was an eligible match for his daughter.





Why can't bats see during the day?

—Lalit Kumar Dhake, Ozar

Bats are active only at night, when they come out in search of food. Strangely, they can find their way in the dark. This is possible with the help of their ears and vocal organs, and not their eyes. They send out high-pitched signals which human ears cannot catch and wait for the echoes either to locate or evade objects in the dark. This 'echolocation' is like the present-day radar system.

Who invented computers?

—M. Vishal, Paloncha

The first automatic computer, the like of which we know of these days, was invented in 1944 by Professor Aiken of Harvard University, assisted by a group of engineers from the IBM Corporation. The machine thus came to be called the Harvard IBM Mark I.

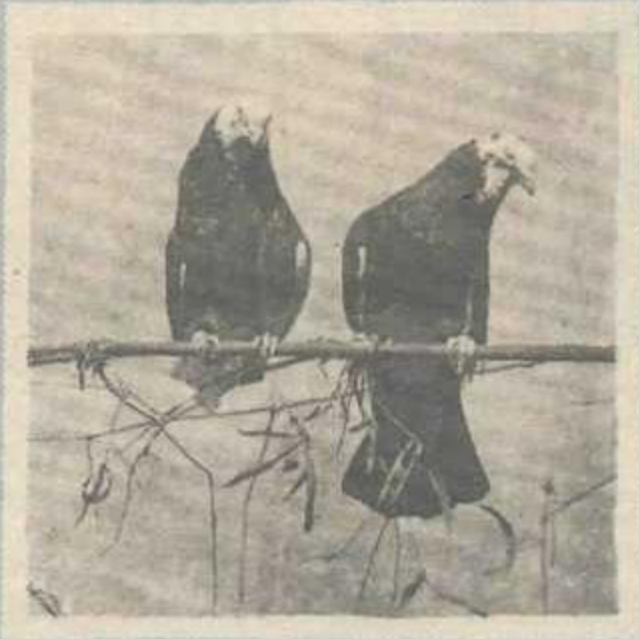
Who is called the Light of Asia?

—Rajnish Agrawal, Jeypore

Mathew Arnold wrote a poem of epic quality and dimension on Lord Buddha and titled it "The Light of Asia".

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



S. S. Ghatege



K. P. A. Swamy

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

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PICKS FROM THE WISE

Is there anyone so wise as to learn by the experience of others?


—Voltaire

Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

—Proverbs XVI

Speech is silver, silence is golden.

—Carlyle



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